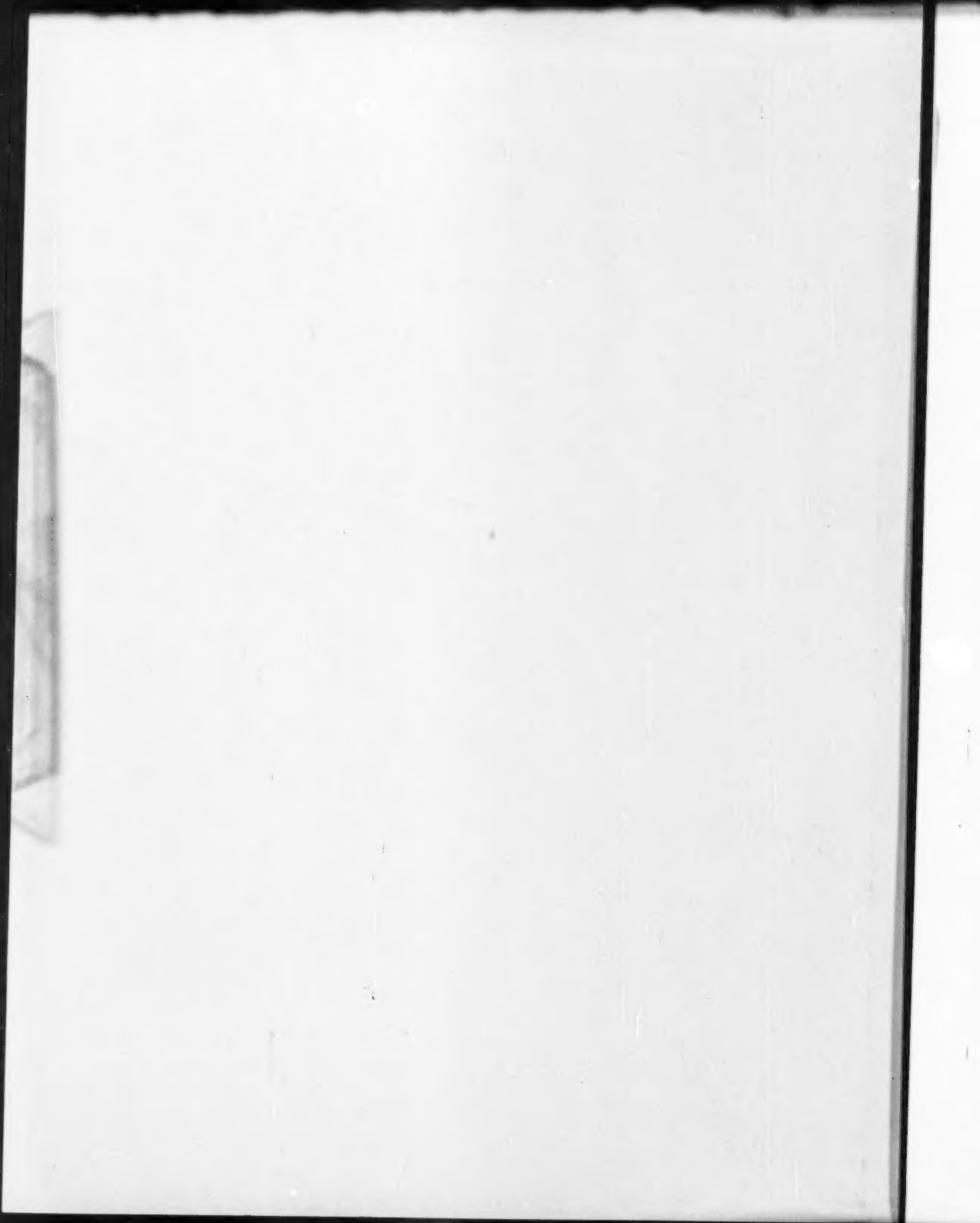


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SUMMER 1952

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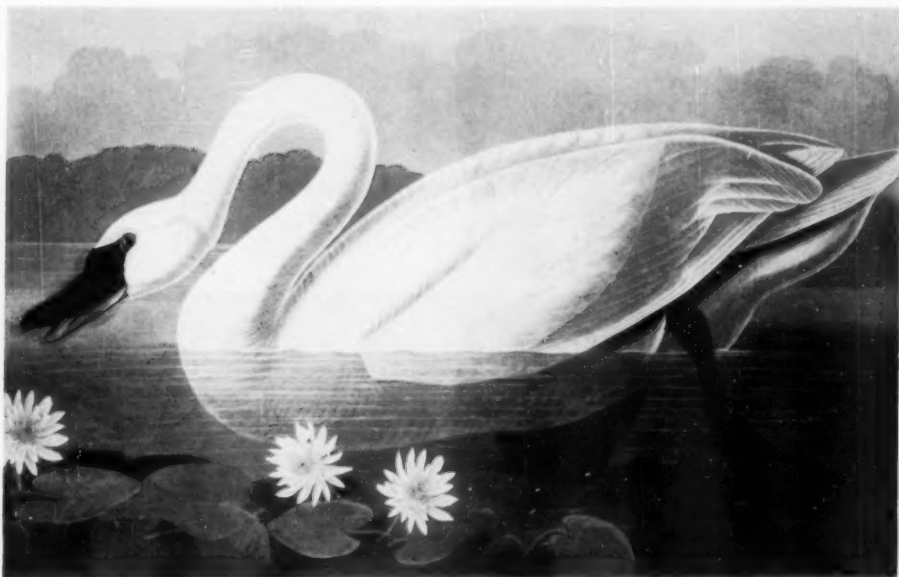


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# The ART Quarterly

PUBLISHED BY THE DETROIT INSTITUTE OF ARTS

*Edited by W. R. VALENTINER and E. P. RICHARDSON*  
*Associate Editor PAUL L. GRIGAUT*

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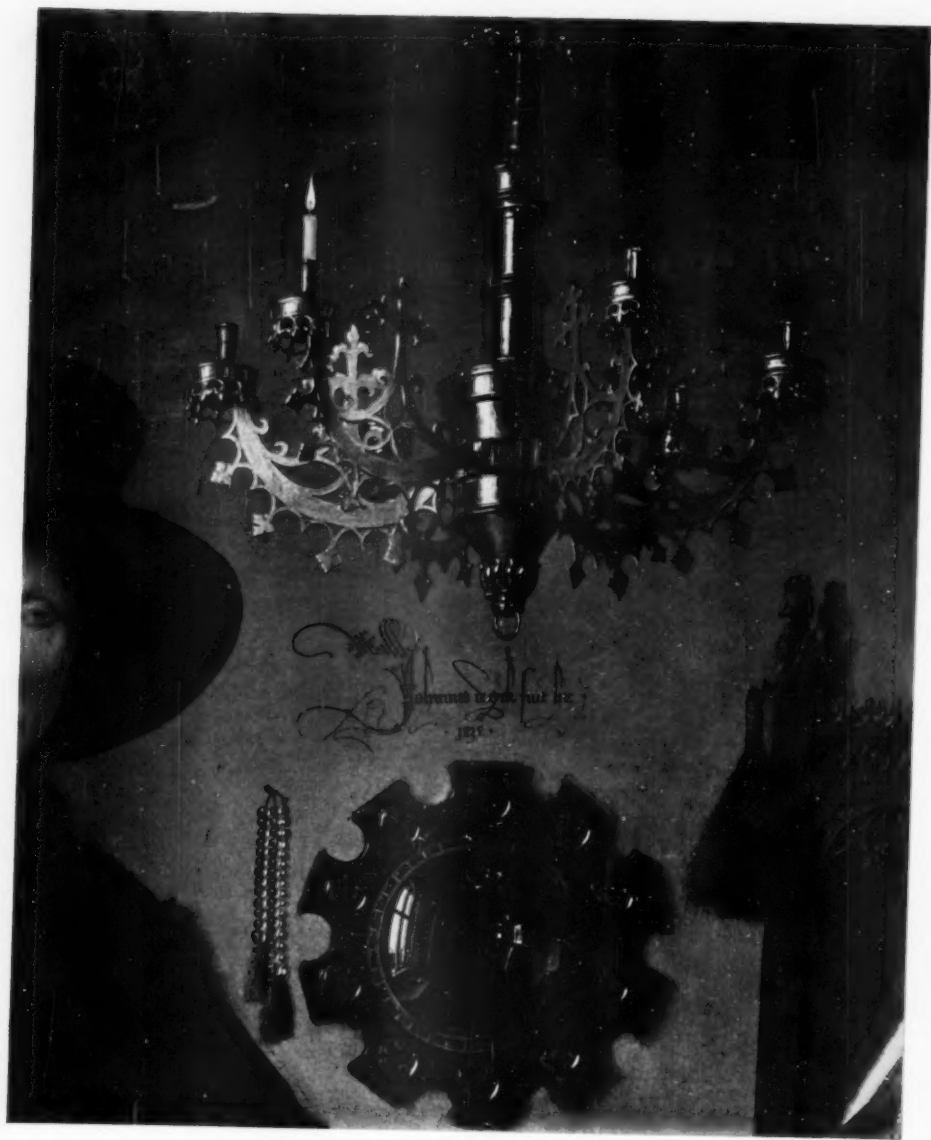
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*Fig. 1. JAN VAN EYCK, Giovanni Arnolfini and his Wife (detail)  
London, National Gallery*

## THE MIRROR IN ART

By HEINRICH SCHWARZ

UNTIL recently Jan van Eyck's portrait of *Giovanni Arnolfini and his Wife, Jeanne de Chenany*, painted in 1434, has been considered one of the earliest purely realistic representations of men in their everyday-life surroundings. Nineteenth century bourgeois conception hailed the painting as an early document of the rising secular trend, as a precursor of Dutch seventeenth century interior painting, and admired it as an exhaustive description of the interior of a well-to-do Flemish dwelling at the beginning of the fifteenth century. Today, thanks to Panofsky's fascinating and convincing interpretation, we know that this approach covered only one aspect of the painting, but that its deeper meaning has been completely forgotten during the course of centuries in which the spiritual ties of religion were loosened.

Today we know that the painting was something like a pictorial marriage document, that the room was not just "an intimate Flemish interior," but a nuptial chamber, every detail of which had its symbolical and religious implication. Thus, the chandelier was a symbol of the Virgin, its one burning candle—the "marriage candle"—a symbol of the presence of deity and the all-seeing wisdom of God; that the little carved sculpture of St. Margaret triumphing over the Dragon, which crowns one post of the armchair, is that of the patron saint of women in expectation of a child; that the dog at the feet of the couple was not just a household pet but a symbol of Fidelity, and that the unusual inscription on the wall reading: *Johannes de Eyck fuit hic*—"Johannes de Eyck was here" was not an ordinary signature, but rather the testimonial of a witness to a marriage.

All these religious and symbolical connotations must have been understandable to devout contemporary admirers of the painting and may have required hardly any elaborate comment.

Little attention has been paid in the past to the mirror (Fig. 1) holding so conspicuous a place in the vertical axis of the painting, between the chandelier and the joined hands of the man and woman concluding the marriage *per*

NOTE: This paper was read before the College Art Association of America at its meeting in Chicago in January, 1950. In the meantime the book by G. F. Hartlaub, *Zauber des Spiegels, Geschichte und Bedeutung des Spiegels in der Kunst*, München, 1951, has been published. I should like to mention that the paper was prepared for publication before Hartlaub's book came to my attention.



*fidem*. It is a large convex glass mirror which reflects not only the reverse of the scene facing the spectator but also two other figures, one of them undoubtedly being that of the artist himself. The mirror shown in this painting is not an ordinary piece of furniture, but its frame is adorned with ten circular representations from the Life and Death of Christ—starting with the Mount of Olives and ending with the Resurrection—a clear indication that the mirror, too, was of symbolical significance. In late medieval conception the mirror, as a symbol of purest reception and rendering, was one of the Virgin's attributes, derived from the seventh chapter of the Book of Wisdom: "For she [namely Wisdom] is an effulgence from everlasting light, and an unspotted mirror of the working of God, and an image of His goodness." The mirror—that is to say, the unblemished mirror, *speculum sine macula*—was the symbol of the Virgin's purity, one of the many symbols referring to St. Mary's Perfections and the miracle of Christ's incarnation. In fact, not only the mirror but glass in general stood as a symbol of the Virgin's purity because not only can the sun's rays penetrate glass without violating it, but glass can absorb and even transfer its colors without diminishing them. The connection between the Virgin, as symbolized by the mirror without stain, and Christ, even leads to an identification between the two, as may be seen in the Arnolfini mirror and its frame, as well as in earlier literary sources where Christ and the Virgin are sometimes correlated or even identified by the symbol of the mirror. In his sermon *De adventu domini*, Master Eckhard, the German mystic, paraphrases the Book of Wisdom, calling "Christ a pure mirror without blemish," and at about the same time we find the illustration "Mary the mirror, Christ the image."

Jacopo de Voragine's *Mariale*, the last of his *Golden Sermons*, which was written after 1255, interpreted at great length the association between the Virgin and the mirror.

She is called a mirror on account of the mirror's composition of glass and lead. Glass stands for her virginity. Because: as the sun penetrates glass without violating it so became Mary a mother without losing her virginity. Lead stands for her ductility and the ashen color of the mirror is a symbol of her humility. She is also called a mirror because of her representation of things, "for as all things are reflected from a mirror, so in the blessed Virgin, as in the mirror of God, ought all to see their impurities and spots, and purify and correct them, for the proud, beholding her humility, see their blemishes, the avaricious see theirs in her poverty, the lovers of pleasures theirs in her vir-



ginity." (E. C. Richardson, *Materials for a Life of Jacopo de Voragine*, New York, 1935, II, 64 f.)

Thus, the mirror pictured in the nuptial chamber of the Arnolfini might be interpreted as an allusion to the Holy Virgin and to the redemption of the world through Christ's incarnation and death. At the same time the mirror, appearing between the artist's testimonial and the two hands like a huge seal that verifies the sacramental ceremony, is a symbol of the all-seeing Eye of God. By creating an image of the visible world, a kind of reduced *copie trompeuse* of optically perceptible facts, the mirror also becomes not only a symbol of Truth or *Veritas*, but also exemplifies the new approach of man towards nature.

To Van Eyck's learned advisers and patrons, the connotation of the mirror and the Virgin was an obvious one and in three of his altarpieces (Ghent, finished 1432; Dresden, c. 1433; Bruges, 1436) the words *Speculum sine macula*, referring to the Virgin, adorn the painting or the frame.

Pictorial representations of the mirror as a symbol of the Virgin's purity—a subject which deeply preoccupied the minds of fourteenth century theologians—are not frequent before the sixteenth century. An early example, preceding the *Arnolfini* portrait by a quarter of a century, is the pendant of the Order of the Lily of Aragon, or the Order of the Mirror of the Blessed Virgin. This short-lived order was founded in 1410 by King Ferdinand of Castille, after his victory over the Moors at Antequiera. The order's gold collar was composed of alternate griffons and vases filled with lilies, another symbol of the Virgin who appears with the Child on the oval pendant which, in its turn, most probably signifies the mirror.

In 1476 Nicolas Froment completed for King René of Anjou his *Triptych with the Burning Bush* (Fig. 6), which is today in the Cathedral Saint-Sauveur in Aix-en-Provence. In the center panel the Virgin with the Child in her lap is sitting in the burning bush, another model of her virginity, since the bush in which the Lord appeared to Moses (Exodus iii. 2) burned but was not consumed by the flames. The small oval mirror in the Child's left hand, reflecting the image of the Mother and Child group, is clearly juxtaposed to the Adam and Eve pendant adorning the angel.

More than half a century later the unblemished mirror—*speculum sine macula*—appears on one of the seventeen Rheims cathedral tapestries (before 1530) representing the *Perfections of the Virgin* according to the Litany, or to Jacopo de Voragine's *Mariale*, which lists no less than 144 virtues, giving their symbols and interpretations. In the center of an enclosed garden flanked

by unicorns, symbols of chastity and virginity, sits the Virgin weaving a strip of tapestry, while angels bring her food. Around her are the fourteen emblems of her perfection: the well of living water; the gate of heaven; the star of the sea; the fountain of the garden; the olive tree; and the mirror without blemish; recalling the words from the Book of Wisdom.

Such pictorial representations of the symbols of Mary's Perfections are unknown before the end of the fifteenth century although the nomenclature goes back to the thirteenth century. They appear in France for the first time in a *Livre d'Heures* published by Antoine Vérard in 1503 and may be found in the sixteenth century as decorations of stalls as well as in church frescoes.

These representations of Mary's virginity in which the Child does not appear are followed by German examples dating from the beginning of the sixteenth century. In a woodcut by Hans Weiditz (Röttinger 27), first published in an Augsburg prayerbook in 1523, the *speculum sine macula* holds a particularly conspicuous place near the praying Virgin. In Giuseppe Cesari's *Conceptio Immaculata* (Madrid, Academy) the Virgin surrounded by angels is floating in the air over a landscape enlivened by the symbols of her Perfections.

Only four years after the *Arnolfini* portrait, in 1438, the Master of Flémalle painted an altarpiece for Heinrich von Werl (Prado). The right wing shows St. Barbara; on the left wing (Fig. 3) the kneeling figure of the donor appears next to St. John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, holding the book with the lamb. In the background of the left wing, in front of a statue of the Virgin with the Child, a large circular mirror alludes to the message of the "voice crying in the wilderness" and its fulfillment through Mary and Christ. In Memling's famous *Martin van Nieuwenhoven* diptych in the Hôpital Saint-Jean in Bruges, painted half a century later, the mirror again appears behind the Virgin and Child. Here too, as in the *Arnolfini* portrait and in the Werl wing, the mirror—which is glanced by the rays emanating from the Child's head—is a symbol of the Virgin, and at the same time, through the reflection appearing in it, "a model of painting as a perfect image of the visible world." Another example of this association of the Virgin with the mirror which is a characteristic feature of fifteenth century Flemish painting, but which in this form is unknown to Italian or German art of the same period, is Hans Memling's so-called *Ryerson Madonna* (Chicago Art Institute).

The mirrors which may be seen in another group of Flemish paintings are also certainly more than mere genre-like household accessories of the shops



*Fig. 2. PETRUS CRISTUS, St. Eloy  
New York, Robert Lehman Collection*



*Fig. 3. MASTER OF  
FLEMALLE, Left Wing of  
Von Werl Altarpiece  
Madrid, Prado*



*Fig. 4.  
QUENTIN MASSYS, The Money-Changer and his Wife  
Paris, Louvre*



Fig. 5. LUCCA DELLA ROBBIA, *Prudentia*  
New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art



Fig. 6. NICOLAS FROMENT, *Triptych with the Burning Bush* (detail)  
Aix-en-Provence, Cathedral Saint-Sauveur

in which they appear; for instance in Petrus Cristus' *St. Eloy* painting of 1449 (Robert Lehman Coll., New York) (Fig. 2), or Quentin Massys' painting of the *Money-changer and his Wife* (Paris, Louvre) (Fig. 4), painted in 1514, which, according to the costumes must go back to an older model painted in the 1440's, or at about the same time as the *St. Eloy* picture. An elaborate monograph devoted to the Petrus Cristus *St. Eloy* painting has identified all the objects which can be seen in it and interpreted their significance. In dealing with the mirror, however, the explanation remained confined to a description of the mirror's shape and of the images shown in it. In both the Petrus Cristus and the Massys, however, the mirrors (as well as the scales, symbol of Justice and thus of the Last Judgment) must have had also a religious significance, alluding in the Petrus Cristus painting to the bride's virginity and in the Massys painting to the wife's preoccupation with St. Mary and the Child, seen in the miniature of her open *Livre d'Heures*. Further, Massys' painting clearly contrasts earthly and spiritual values by the juxtaposition of the activities engaging the man and his wife. The mirrors in both paintings reflect the evanescent image of the "World" and may therefore also be symbols of Vanity, pointing to the transitoriness of the delusive treasures surrounding the money-changer and the goldsmith. And since mirrors and their assumed magic powers were used for the detection of thieves—a custom later prohibited by the Church—there is also a probability that the mirrors appearing on the counters with the treasures of the money-changer and the goldsmith may be interpreted as protective devices against theft.

Besides its purely religious significance as a symbol of the Virgin's purity and chastity—a symbol which appears with the great revival of Virgin worship which spread over the religious world in the twelfth century—the mirror had many other connotations in late medieval conception.

Rachel and Leah, the former representing the Contemplative, the latter the Active Life, are described by Dante (*Purgatorio*, XXVII, 94-108) as looking into the mirror, meaning the face of God. Leah, the older sister, gazes into the mirror while adorning herself with flowers, denoting her good deeds, whereas her younger sister Rachel, recognizing the Truth, faces the mirror continuously. The metaphorical use in literature of the word *Speculum* to indicate the complete and precise image of a theme, although extending back into antiquity, becomes particularly frequent following the thirteenth century. Although used as title for legal, philosophical and satirical works, theological *specula*, such as the "*Speculum humanæ salvationis*," the "*Speculum passionis*"



or the "Speculum artis bene moriendi," are predominant and form an immense number of such titles even up to the present day.

The symbolic use of the mirror, instrument of purest and most faithful reception and rendering, as an attribute of Truth is rather obvious. It appears in this signification in Peter Flettner's playing card showing two men facing a mirror held by a woman, the personification of *Veritas*, who see in it their heads adorned with fools' caps. In the set of the so-called *Tarocchi* engravings (c. 1465) Prudence, one of the cardinal virtues, is personified by a figure whose head is formed by two faces, the face of a bearded man looking backward representing retrospection and experience, and the face of a young woman looking into a mirror, representing self-knowledge as the other basic presupposition of prudence.

The same dualistic conception of Prudence or Wisdom may be found in one of Luca della Robbia's reliefs in the Portogallo Chapel in San Miniato al Monte near Florence which was built between 1461 and 1466. A variant of the Prudence relief is in the Metropolitan Museum (Fig. 5). It shows the same conception of *Prudentia* or Prudence—the contracted form of *Providentia* or Foresight—as the *Tarocchi* engraving which belongs to exactly the same period, namely to the middle of the 1460's.

The strong temporal implication expressed in the *Tarocchi* engraving and in the Luca della Robbia relief are verbally expressed in the small *Prudentia* engraving by the anonymous Italian engraver, known under the name Master I B with the Bird (London, British Museum) (Fig. 7) for the Latin inscription on this print reads in translation "I weigh the present and link the future with the past."

It is therefore not surprising that we also know of *Prudentia* representations with three faces indicating that a prudent man is not only attentive to the present but that his attention is equally turned towards the past and the future.

The triple-faced, as well as the double-faced, *Prudentia* representations however, which may be found as early as in Giotto's Arena frescoes (1306), do not appear very frequently and were later rejected because of their unnaturalness. Thus Piero Pollaiuolo's single-faced *Prudentia* (1470), in the Council Hall of the Palazzo del Tribunale di Mercanzia in Florence, holds in one hand the mirror in which her image is reflected, while her other hand holds the serpent, symbol of cleverness, which also appears—in the form of a little dragon—on the *Tarocchi* engraving as well as on the *Prudence* reliefs on the tombs of Pope Sixtus IV and Pope Innocent VIII in St. Peter's.

*Prudentia's* most common symbols, the mirror and the serpent, sometimes supplemented by the compass, symbol of just measure, remained and survived until late into the eighteenth century. The two emblems, mirror and serpent, are derived from the Scriptures, the former from the Book of Wisdom (vii. 26) the latter from the Gospel according to St. Matthew (x. 16):

"For she [Wisdom] is . . . the unspotted mirror of the power of God, and the image of His goodness." And "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves."

The double- and triple-faced *Prudentia* originated in Italy and entered French art early in the sixteenth century, but was unknown to early Flemish art where a different conception originating in France may be found. Pieter Bruegel's *Prudentia* exemplifies this conception, showing Prudence with the mirror—but without the serpent—a sieve which she balances on her head ("to sift the chaff from the wheat"), and a coffin indicating that a wise man always remains conscious of the future and the transitoriness of his earthly life and goods. "Id enim est sapientis providere: ex quo sapientia est appellata prudentia" (Cicero, *Fragm. ap. non.* 41, 31).

The personification of *Sapientia* or Wisdom connected with the attribute of the mirror may be seen in the woodcut frontispiece of Charles de Bouvelles's *Liber de Sapiente*, published in Paris and Amiens in 1510-1511. Here *Sapientia*, looking into a mirror expressing self-knowledge, is contrasted to blindfolded *Fortuna* holding the wheel of fortune. On the other hand, *Fortuna* also appears sometimes in early Renaissance art of about the same period with the attribute of the mirror. Its significance in *Fortuna's* hands, however, is less obvious than that of her other attributes as they appear in the engraving by the North Italian, Master of 1515 (Fig. 8). The ball on which she stands is symbolic of her unsteadiness; the wings allude to her fleeting character; the remote and inaccessible island palace points to her "otherworld" dwelling-place while the mirror in her hands may indicate the transitoriness of its image and *Fortuna's* evanescence and impermanence. As so often in medieval and later symbolism, the mirror assumes quite opposite roles: it stands for good and for evil; for sacred and for profane; for the spiritual and for the worldly. It was the symbol of the Virgin's chastity and of the repentant sinners St. Magdalen (Georges de la Tour, *La Madeleine au Miroir*, André Fabius Coll.; Charles Le Brun, *Sainte Madeleine*, Louvre) and St. Thais, but it was also the attribute of the two Deadly Sins: *Superbia* or Pride and *Luxuria* or Lust, who are frequently represented with a mirror in medieval miniature paintings, as well as in the

sculptures (Bordeaux, Moissac and Arles) and stained glass windows (Notre-Dame, Auxerre and Lyons) of the great French cathedrals.

*Superbia* or Pride is usually represented as an elaborately dressed woman looking self-conceitedly into a mirror and accompanied by a peacock, the emblem of the Deadly Sin of Pride. This is how Pride appears in Bruegel's drawing of 1557 (Fig. 10). Bosch's representation of *Superbia* (Prado) (Fig. 11) makes the evil connotation even more explicit; for the mirror reflecting the face of the proud woman is held by a devilish creature who mockingly wears the same headdress as the woman. Later this representation is sometimes modified so that the woman is either adorned with peacock feathers or is shown holding a fan made of peacock feathers.

The symbolization of Vision, one of the Five Senses, is not too different from the one which characterizes *Superbia* or Pride, since the mirror is the most common attribute of Vision, which sometimes even appears accompanied by a peacock because the feathers of his train bear the "peacock-eyes," although this bird has no other connection with the sense of Vision. More frequently, however, Vision is accompanied by the eagle and the cat, indicating keen vision by day and night.

The magic and seductive power of the mirror becomes apparent when we find it in the hands of sirens, particularly as an attribute of Scylla. Although no reference to the mirror can be found in Homer's description of the mermaids (Odyssey, XII, 44) we see Scylla "gazing into her mirror as the ship is being drawn to destruction" in a drawing by the German sculptor Peter Vischer the Younger, done in 1514 (Fig. 14). The drawing is a preparatory sketch for a relief adorning the Sebaldus shrine in Nuremberg. The mermaid with the mirror becomes the symbol of "Feigned Love" (Cesare Ripa, *Iconologia*). Among the drawings with which an English fourteenth century artist adorned Queen Mary's Psalter (British Museum) appear sirens, one of them holding up a mirror, who lull mariners to sleep with their song and then destroy them. Later examples may be found in a Florentine engraving of about 1460-1470 (Hind, pl. 47) or in the *St. Christopher* woodcut by Jost Amman (A. 53). In a Flemish painting of the early sixteenth century in which Odysseus' adventures are transformed into Christian conceptions, mermaids, one of them holding a mirror, are trying to destroy the "Ship of Salvation."

The Italian Renaissance revived the classical connection between Venus and the mirror, the origin of which may go back to ancient Near Eastern conceptions. The strength of the association between Venus and the mirror is indicated





Fig. 7. MASTER I B WITH THE BIRD  
Prudentia  
London, British Museum

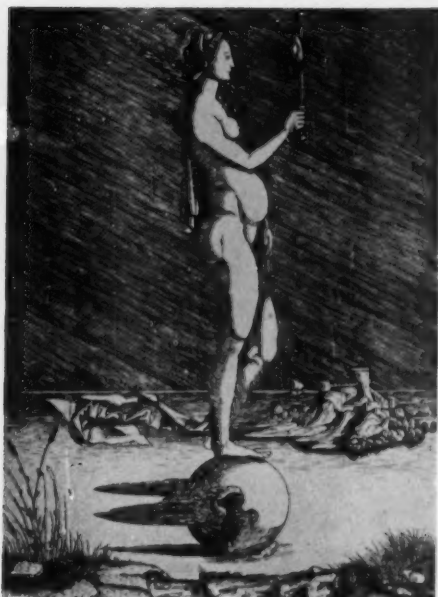


Fig. 8. MASTER OF 1515, Fortuna (engraving)



Fig. 9. Marcia Painting her Self-Portrait  
(from Boccaccio's "De Claris Mulieribus")  
Paris, Bibl. Nat. Fr. 12420



Fig. 10. AFTER PIETER BRUEGEL, *Superbia* (engraving)  
New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art



Fig. 11. HIERONYMUS BOSCH, *Superbia* (from the  
painted tableboard with the Seven Deadly Sins)  
Madrid, Prado



Fig. 12. LAUX FURTENAGEL  
*Hans Burgkmair and his Wife*  
Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum

by the fact that the calendar sign for Venus has been interpreted as the outline of a handmirror, since the handles of ancient handmirrors are often formed by sculptured images of Aphrodite. The implicit connection between Aphrodite, goddess of beauty and love, and Vanity is clearly pronounced, so that the mirror in the hands of Vanity—Vanity in both the sense of conceit and of transitoriness—forms an obvious association. It shows again how the same attribute or emblem is used for strictly opposite conceptions. For Vanity, like Lust and Pride, is considered sinful, yet we find them represented with the same attribute as that of their spiritual opponent Prudence, which together with Temperance, Fortitude and Justice form the four ancient cardinal virtues. Lust and Vanity are sometimes blended into one representation, as in the Memling painting in Strasbourg, and it is hard to discern which of the two vices is actually represented. In Hans Baldung Grien's *Three Ages* (Vienna) the central figure between the old woman (holding the mirror before the young girl) and the figure of death (raising an hour glass over her head) may be considered a representation of the Vanity of youth; the child, whose vision and future are obscured by the veil, stands for inexperience, while the old woman only partly emerging out of the dark, forms the contrast to the two preceding stages of life. The mirror appearing in a representation of the "three periods of life" and being held by the young girl, who can look back to childhood and must look forward to old age, recalls Vulcan's mirror, which showed the Past, the Present and the Future (Sir John Davies, *Orchestra or A Poeme on Dauncing*, London, 1596, stanza 126).

The revealing, but also the tragic and magic power of the mirror, pointing to its association not only with *Veritas* and *Vanitas* but also with *Prudentia*, is expressed in Laux Furtenagel's portrait of *Hans Burgkmair and his Wife*, painted in 1527 (Vienna) (Fig. 12). Instead of their faces, two skulls appear in the mirror; the inscription in the right upper corner emphasizes the strange apparition: "This is what we looked like—in the mirror, however, nothing appeared but that." The inscription on the mirror's frame, "Know thyself" (*Erken dich selbs*), points to Self-Knowledge which, together with Retrospection and Foresight, are the connotations of the mirror in the hands of Prudence. Two years after Furtenagel's portrait, Hans Baldung Grien's painting of *Veritas* or *Truth* (Munich) shows a similar symbolism. The conceptions and ideas so nobly expressed in Furtenagel's *Burgkmair* double portrait have survived through the centuries until, in our day, they have reached the low depths of a popular picture-puzzle.

According to Diogenes Laertius' *Lives of the Philosophers* (II, 33), written in the third century A.D., Socrates advised his young disciples to look frequently at themselves in mirrors in order to make themselves worthy of their beauty, or if they were ugly to compensate and to cover their imperfection through education (Fig. 15). Italian emblem books of the sixteenth century, like Achilles Bocchius' book (Bologna, 1555, Symb. LIX) and Italian painters of the following century, like Domenico Fetti (Florence, Uffizi) seized the theme which, for the latter, offered fascinating opportunities for a genre-like treatment of the classical aphorism "Know thyself," the famous inscription on the Apollo temple in Delphi. Bruegel's *Elck or Everyman* (British Museum), however, searches in vain for his advantage, that is himself, and the picture of *Nemo*, the man looking into the mirror, bears the pessimistic inscription: "Nobody knows himself."

The mirror in Jan van Eyck's *Arnolfini* portrait may be considered a perfect exemplification of the fusion between the two controversial forces of the past and the future; the world of symbols and the world of visible facts. While the supernaturalistic outlook was becoming weaker and was finally to yield to an objective-naturalistic attitude, lacking in any symbolic or religious meaning, science was taking over the vacant place. "Thus began that confusion between science and art, that passion for the exact copying of nature" through which the mirror, by virtue of its very qualities, was to become a most important implement. "Narcissus, who saw his reflection in the water, and trembled at the beauty of his own face, was the real inventor of painting," wrote Leone Battista Alberti in his *Trattato della Pittura* (1436), and "the mirror—above all, the mirror is our teacher," exclaimed Leonardo a few decades later. It may be interesting to note here that in Bruges the painters and the glass and mirror makers were united in the Guild of St. Luke, while the miniaturists and calligraphers belonged to the Guild of St. John.

Even before Van Eyck painted the *Arnolfini* portrait, the mirror had entered the artist's studio, first of all as an indispensable aid to the artist painting or carving his own portrait. It may be considered a strange coincidence that the first literary and pictorial documents referring to mirror self-portraiture refer to women painters. According to the younger Pliny, Lala of Kyzikos painted a portrait of herself with the help of a mirror. And in a French illuminated manuscript of Boccaccio's *De claris mulieribus* (*Le livre des femmes nobles et renommées*, Paris, Bibl. Nat. Fr. 12420) finished in 1402, we find a miniature of the nun Marcia painting her own portrait with the aid of a mirror (Fig. 9).

The scientific study of the mirror and of its usefulness to the artist, however, originated in Italy, the country which was to become the leading manufacturer of mirrors in the sixteenth century. One or two years after the *Arnolfini* portrait had been executed, Leone Battista Alberti wrote in his *Trattato della Pittura*: "A mirror will greatly help you to judge of relief-effect. And I do not know why good paintings, when reflected in a mirror, are full of charm; and it is wonderful how any defect in a painting shows its ugliness in the mirror. Therefore things drawn after life are to be amended with a mirror." A few years later Alberti's contemporary Filarete recorded similar experiences and linked them with the study of perspective. And Leonardo da Vinci not only elaborated on Alberti's and Filarete's observations, urging the artist to take the mirror for his guide, but also, as a physicist, studied the mirror, the laws of reflection of sound and of light, and many other aspects of its properties. He was well acquainted with the great optical treatises of the Arabian scholars and their Northern thirteenth century disciples Vitellio, Bacon, and Peckham, who had laid the ground for the study of the laws of reflection. Leonardo may also have been familiar with Brunelleschi's two *Veduti*, which he might have seen in the Medici collection but which are lost today. According to Brunelleschi's biographer Manetti, in one of the *Veduti*, showing the Piazza della Signoria, the sky following the upper edges of the houses was cut out and the painting was to be viewed so that the real sky would appear above the buildings, thus giving a still greater illusion of reality to the scene. The panel of the other painting, representing the Florence Baptistery, had a funnel-shaped hole, the mouth of which coincided with the vanishing point; by peeping through the hole from the back of the panel the painting, or rather its reflected image, could be seen in a mirror placed in front of the picture. In order to increase the realism Brunelleschi even covered the painted sky with burnished silver so that the real sky and moving clouds would be reflected in it. These were by no means mere optical toys but the result of Brunelleschi's studies and experiments in the field of perspective, in which the mirror played no small role, so that the personification of Perspective is sometimes endowed with a mirror (Cesare Ripa, *Iconologia*). Although these *Veduti* were contemporaneous with the Flemish fifteenth century representations of mirrors, they were far removed from their symbolical and religious implications and connotations.

The increasingly scientific spirit pervading the realm of art is also clearly evinced in a painting such as Parmigianino's *Self-Portrait* (Vienna) (Fig. 16)



which, according to Vasari, was painted with the help of a convex mirror "such as is used by barbers." The painting is executed on a spherical or parabolical panel segment and shows how fifteenth century men looked to themselves when facing a mirror, for most of the mirrors of this period were blown convex spherical mirrors, although flat glass mirrors were not unknown. Amman's woodcut of 1568 of the workshop of a mirror maker still shows mostly convex mirrors, such as we have seen in the Flemish fifteenth century and early sixteenth century German paintings.

As early as in the fourteenth century Nuremberg had a guild of glass mirror makers, but it was in Venice, or rather Murano, that glass mirror making first acquired commercial importance and became a great industry. In 1564 the Republic had to separate the glass mirror makers from other glass makers and to establish a separate guild for them. The frequent appearance of mirrors in Venetian paintings, therefore (Bellini, Titian, Veronese and Tintoretto) may not be purely accidental. The two Muranezians, however, who in 1507 applied to the Venice Council of Ten and claimed to possess the secret of making perfect mirrors of crystalline glass, had to admit that one German manufactory associated with a Flemish house already enjoyed the monopoly of this product. From this time on, metal mirrors, the classical mirrors of the ancients—who, however, had also known glass mirrors—had come to an end.

Venice supplied the whole world with mirrors for more than a century and the secrets of Venetian glass and mirror making were carefully guarded because of their highly profitable revenues for the Republic of Venice. At the end of the seventeenth century, however, Venetian workers brought their secrets to France, where Colbert started an establishment for making mirrors in Paris in 1665. Five years later the Duke of Buckingham established a manufactory in Lambeth, England, where "flint glass" was used for the fabrication of mirrors. Although the finest mirrors were still imported from Venice, France became the leader in the art of mirror making in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (and the mirror galleries, such as the famous Versailles mirror gallery in which the firmness of the walls seems to be dissolved, are well-known examples of the use of mirrors as interior decoration).

In the seventeenth century the black convex mirror appears as an aiding device of the painter. "In it the subject was reflected like a Flemish landscape and the artist only had to paint what he saw in the mirror." Thus Mrs. Merri-field (1849) describes the black mirror which once belonged to Pieter van Laar and was bequeathed by him to Poussin's brother-in-law, Gaspard Dughet.



Fig. 13. ATTRIBUTED TO GAINSBOROUGH, *Self-Portrait* (drawing)  
New York, Morgan Library



Fig. 14. PETER VISCHER THE YOUNGER, *Scylla* (drawing)  
Montreal, Mr. & Mrs. L. V. Randall Collection



*Fig. 15. Naples, Middle of 17th Century, Socrates and his Disciples  
Bergamo, Private Collection*



*Fig. 16. FRANCESCO PARMIGIANINO, Self-Portrait  
Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum*



For some unknown reason this kind of mirror later became associated with Claude Lorrain's name and was, and still is, popularly known as "Claude glass." At about the same time Gerard Dou, the son of a glassmaker, is said to have devised a contrivance combining a convex mirror with Alberti's *reticolato*, both of which were placed between the model and the artist, enabling him to make use simultaneously of these two mechanical aids. A similar arrangement, consisting of a circular convex mirror of one foot diameter to be attached to the draughtsman's portfolio or drawing board, is described in Gérard de Lairese's *Grand Livre des Peintres ou l'Art de la Peinture*. All these devices made it necessary for the artist to approach the subject with his back towards it; on the other hand these devices enabled the painter or draughtsman to choose the most desirable reduction of his model by getting closer to it or by withdrawing from it.

There has been much speculation as to whether Velazquez made use of mirrors in painting *Las Meninas* (Prado) in 1656. "It is quite possible," wrote Carl Justi, "that Velazquez made use of a mirror in painting this picture." In fact, we know that Velazquez must have greatly enjoyed mirrors and that his household and studio must have been full of them since no less than ten mirrors are listed in the inventory taken after the artist's death. In Velazquez' *Venus and Amor* (London, National Gallery), painted at about the same time as *Las Meninas*, Venus' looking-glass is very similar to the mirror which reflects the images of King Philip IV and his Queen Maria Anna in *Las Meninas*. Compositional elements found in *Las Meninas* seem so alien to Spanish art that the question has been raised whether Velazquez was not subject to Dutch influences when he painted the portrait of the Princess with her court ladies, and whether Terborch's possible visit to Spain and his influence may not be reflected in this painting. For the mirror—which the French seventeenth century painter Charles-Alphonse Du Fresnoy had called "the painter's best master"—played an important role in Dutch seventeenth century interior paintings, in the works of Vermeer, Pieter de Hooch, Janssens, Metsu and others, some of whom may have used mirrors not only as details appearing in their interiors but also as aids just as they may have used the camera obscura. In fact, Waagen remarked that in *Las Meninas* one seems to observe Nature as in a camera obscura, while to Stirling-Maxwell the painting looked like "an anticipation of Daguerre's invention." The history of the camera obscura and its use by artists actually has much in common with the history of the mirror, and Jean Cocteau's definition of photography: "Miroir reformant"

may be not inappropriately mentioned here.

The mirror and camera obscura, the telescope, microscope and magic lantern have formed part of any treatise on optics published since the late sixteenth century; many of these must have been well known to artists and may have been included among their reference books. Thus the allegorical frontispiece of a rare German book on optics, published in Coburg in 1710, *Der dreyfach geartete Sehe-Strahl*—"The Ray of Vision in its Threefold Form"—illustrates the common division of the science of geometrical optics into its three fundamental sections: the central head refers to ordinary vision, exemplified by the human eye and the camera; the left one to Catoptrics or reflected rays, exemplified by the mirror; and the right one to Dioptrics or the laws of refraction, as exemplified by the telescope.

The black mirror, or Claude glass, has survived into our day. It was and still is particularly popular, not so much in Claude Lorrain's homeland, which may or may not be the country of its origin, but in England, where it was widely used in the eighteenth century. Gainsborough, who was much interested in optical experiments and, like Reynolds, an advocate of the camera obscura, used the mirror for his landscape drawings as two self-portrait drawings (British Museum; another attributed to Gainsborough in the Morgan Library (Fig. 13) reveal). Moreover, during Gainsborough's and Reynolds' lifetime, the Claude glass was so popular in England that it was used not only by artists but also by the "Pilgrims of Nature," to use Walter Scott's phrase for men roaming the woods and mountains, among whom it became fashionable to enjoy the beautiful views not only in reality but also through the reduced images appearing in their pocket-mirrors, of which even two kinds, one for sunny, one for dark days, were obtainable. In the 1830's—the decade which brought forth photography—the Austrian realist painter Waldmüller painted his landscapes with the help of a black mirror which is still preserved; and at the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries a treatise by the French painter Pierre-Henri Valenciennes warmly recommended it as a superior substitute for the camera obscura.

Nowhere, however, has the Claude glass attained such popularity as in England, where it is still used by artists. Only a few years ago a photograph was published, showing Graham Sutherland, the contemporary English painter, viewing with the aid of a black mirror his *Crucifixion* painting in Northampton's St. Matthew's church (Fig. 17). A long time had passed since the sight of a mirror had evoked religious associations, and this artist of the twentieth



*Fig. 17. Graham Sutherland Viewing his Crucifixion Painting in St. Matthew's, Northampton, in a Black Mirror (from Architectural Review, CI, no. 603 [March, 1947], 106)*

century was certainly unaware of Jacopo de Voragine's words, written seven hundred years earlier in one of his *Golden Sermons* on the Virgin: "Speculum in quo refulsit Christus, qui est imago Dei patris." "The mirror in which Christ is reflected, who is the image of God the Father."

## JACOPO DELLA QUERCIA AND THE PORTA DELLA MANDORLA<sup>1</sup>

By GIULIA BRUNETTI

Translation by Marvin D. Schwartz

IN THE last years of the fourteenth century in Florence a sculptor, filled with enthusiasm for antique art and imbued with the more essential values of the Gothic, executed the two figures of the *Annunciation* (Figs. 1, 2, 8, 9) for the lunette of the Porta della Mandorla, now in the Museo dell'Opera del Duomo. The first phase of the construction of the door<sup>2</sup> is crowned by this remarkable scene. The same artist is responsible for two sections on the left of the embrasure frieze of this door: in the lower part the first two busts of angels; in the center a small figure of Hercules on a spray of acanthus; and in the higher part an angel and a small figure of Apollo standing on an acanthus spray playing music. The statues and reliefs form a stylistic group, the homogeneity of which has not always been recognized. I believe this is due to the remarkable complexity of feeling that they inspire, though there is an unusual spiritual profundity and height of ideals indicating them to be unequivocally the product of a single talented master.

None of the names so far suggested for this sculptor satisfactorily help to explain the range and beauty of his work, although these two characteristics have received more than a little recognition in critical literature.<sup>3</sup> Not the name of Nanni di Banco, which seemed well founded but whose known works coming immediately afterward appear to have an incomprehensible listlessness compared to the sculptor in question. Not that of Jacopo di Piero Guidi, for whom there are documents of 1388 and 1389 pertaining to a commission for an *Annunciation*, the single basis for the attribution, I believe (only the *Annunciate* was actually executed), and these documents seem to me to refer to a small statue in the summit of the Porta dei Cornacchini.<sup>4</sup> Nor that of Giovanni d'Ambrogio (although the two pieces from the frieze that we shall study are from his workshop)<sup>5</sup> because he was old and not of the first rank; furthermore his interest in antique culture is portrayed in a superficial and archaic style and becomes purely traditional fourteenth century work. For our master this interest, like the Gothic experience, is used to express a reality more profound in its various aspects. It is enough to see how he differentiated the delicate feeling of astonishment in the Virgin confronted by the message from

the solemn boldness of the messenger; or the indignant austerity of Hercules from the idyllic affability of Apollo. Even a spray of acanthus carved by him seems to bend in a heroic region.

Important signs make the *Annunciation* appear to be the work of a young man. There is the extraordinarily bold originality of arranging the Virgin like a Hermes or an Olympic winner;<sup>6</sup> the angel like an Apollo. The abundance of folds, a return to the Florentine sculptural tradition — the depository of the Pisan-Sienese heredity — reveals a thousand possibilities of renewal in an exuberance not yet disciplined. On the other hand, a gradual stylistic progression clearly discernable in the reliefs of the embrasure confirms the supposition that we are confronted by a personality in the process of maturing.

The first figure executed is without doubt the second angel (from the bottom) in the lower stone (Fig. 3). The vigorous plastic sense and a quest for intensity of expression reveal the young artist in a world completely different from that superficial and more or less popular one of some of the other collaborators, though one cannot overlook the fact that the hand with pointing finger is too rigidly in line with the forearm, and the scroll is developed poorly so that there is something uncertain in the proportions. The angel below (Fig. 4) has not this deficiency. The rich plastic mass is balanced within the hexagon. The scroll has a full development. The intense glance has none of the bovine quality of the figure above. It is well supported by the gesture of surprise of the hand which is withdrawn naturally. There is not yet present, however, the immediacy and vivacity which the artist will show in arranging the Annunciate in a similar gesture. The robust construction is perceived — as in all this section of the whole group in question that is reminiscent of Nanni di Banco — through a veil of immobility that creates something of a distance between the figure and the spectator. Is there a timidity that is perhaps something more than technical? Certainly our sculptor reconciles a new profound admiration for the austere majesty of Nicola Pisano with a more refined naturalistic and decorative sense, in homage to the vogue of his time and his own youthful hedonism.

Equilibrium but not inertness is a characteristic shown by the reliefs of the upper section. The figure of the last hexagon (Fig. 7) is freed from that outer casing to move in the fabulous world of knighthood and legend. Truly a breath of originality pervades the entire work. In the sweet, dreamy yet strong expression of the face clearly marked by the pupils; in the open lips, like the other angels but with less expression of astonishment; in the looseness of the arrangement, marvelously supported by the natural chiaroscuro of the drapery and by





Fig. 1. JACOPO DELLA QUERCIA  
*Angel of the Annunciation*  
Florence, Museo dell'Opera del Duomo



Fig. 2. JACOPO DELLA QUERCIA  
*Virgin of the Annunciation*  
Florence, Museo dell'Opera del Duomo



*Fig. 3. JACOPO DELLA QUERCIA, Angel, detail from the Porta della Mandorla  
Florence, Cathedral*



*Fig. 4. JACOPO DELLA QUERCIA, Angel, detail from the Porta della Mandorla  
Florence, Cathedral*



the superb volutes of the scroll; in the graceful freedom of the hairdress and the costume, almost like that of a page on an errand; in the vigor of modeling, expanded but still elastic — in all these a new dynamic relationship between the relief and the frame that encloses it is created. All is composed with an idealization that, while not breaking iconographic chains, suggests to our imagination the more varied images of compassion and of legendary bravery.<sup>7</sup>

Only geniuses are capable of such power of suggestion. The decoration also — as it is handled in the frieze — has a true richness, although the whole ornamentation is reduced to the simple four-lobed button that closes the cloak. The same creative power that in this frieze has given us the most gorgeous acanthus in the whole Porta, has placed there the most beautiful and noble figures. It is superfluous to mention that such a plastic conception at that time (1392-1393) was of immense importance in the development of art. The more vital current of fifteenth century Gothic found its most decisive impulse there.

Having in common that profound sense of dignity which keeps them apart from all other small figures that, mainly as drolleries, people the embrasure and the band inside the portal, the Hercules and Apollo are to be differentiated from one another in a way analogous to the angels on the two different stones. Thus, while not having shared completely the almost ecstatic hardness of the two figures which enclose it, the first (Fig. 5) is still far from the effusiveness of the second (Fig. 6). His head and shoulders are erect, his glance high and far off. The slight relaxation of the flanks does not minutely disturb the balance of these perfect limbs, which are studied from an antique relief, within the very elegant, worthy frame formed by the acanthus.

For the Apollo this foliage is also the idyllic woody nook which invites him to stop and play music. He seems to have just arrived, an impression due to a certain instability in his position derived from placing the foot which carries the weight exactly in the center of the leaves; and already his gracious head is leaning affectionately on his instrument. It is a little romantic episode full of intimacy and freshness.

Let us now consider the two statues in the lunette. Here we find the sculptor has broadened his viewpoint. There is no longer the static conception characteristic of figures in the first part of the embrasure. These were restricted by their austerity. Now he has learned how to express the relationship of the figures. In the last angel and in the Apollo, encouraged by the freedom usually permitted in such decorative representations and facilitated by technique, he abandons himself to a taste for the imaginative. Now he feels profoundly the

obligation that the biblical scene inspires, the requirements of conceiving his subject in the round a little less than life-size, and the importance of the place for which the work was destined. Also, out of respect for tradition, which the young master rekindled with a direct borrowing from the better Pisan period, he developed these forms which are so neatly turned and incised that they appear metallic. Notwithstanding the fact that they were executed presumably four years later, at first glance these figures of the *Annunciation* appear more archaic than the last part of the frieze. However, the smoothness of the surfaces with their completely new value of luminosity does not impair the liveliness of the material, and the modeling has unusual firmness. The masses have a restrained force, a sharpness that is unique for the period. These two figures, while reminiscent of the great Pisan forebears, seem to participate in the new spirit of art.

Gabriel, his superb Apollo-like head at an excited tilt, his body arranged freely in a rhythmic *contrapposto*, is overtaken with passion. The Virgin, with her strange boyish hair-do and her full face (Fig. 9), with her surprise, almost her dismay at being confronted with so strong a command, is portrayed in a more restrained manner. Nevertheless, so much inner energy gives consistency to these gestures, and convinces us of this sudden action of the soul, notwithstanding the fact that this rhythm and grace recall the decorative *contrapposti* and affected contortions of certain vase figures. The drama of the *Annunciation* is apprehended in all its solemn and delicate poetry and the pathos of human nature made divine.

Is it not possible to recognize here one of the greatest personalities of the quattrocento, who can make us dream, move us to pity, frighten us, or stop us and almost confound us into a sense of respect; who constantly attracts us into an atmosphere of epic greatness? We are confronted with an artist who can at once revive the dignity of Nicola, the passion of Giovanni, the excellence and beauty of the antique, and fuse them with some of the more valid characteristics of the civilization that surrounded him in the crucible of genuine originality.

Space does not permit enumeration of the minute stylistic similarities that would be revealed from a thorough investigation, which would also show the rapid progress of which this artist was capable. In this extraordinary, rich temperament there is a plastic sensitivity which continuously improves in delicacy. Other points occur that persuade us more completely still of the satisfaction of such research. One cannot doubt, for example, that the same

type of princely youth which seems to have inspired the last angel of the embrasure will, in the space of years, lead to the large figure of St. Richard of the Trenta Altar; while this richness of compassion will reappear in the allegory of the *Fonte Gaia*. The austere gesture of the Hercules is found again, softened by melancholy, in the Apostle of the Lucca Cathedral. The Gabriel of the Cathedral Museum already foreshadows the pre-Michelangesque *terribilità* of the young Prophet who extends a haughty glance over his shoulder from a niche of the Baptismal font in Siena; the Apollo foreshadows the persuasive gracefulness of the temptress Eve on the portal of S. Petronio; the Annunciate Virgin, the crystalline but animated purity of the figure on the tomb of Ilaria del Carretto.

Stylistic arguments, then, point to Jacopo della Quercia in his youthful and hitherto mysterious period. But if the attribution for these appear too bold to some, here are some supporting arguments that can be said to be almost documentary and right from Vasari:

Trovasi nella allogazione delle porte di San Giovanni, Jacopo essere stato di quelle in concorrenza fra i maestri, ch'a tal'lavoro furono eletti: in far saggio d'una storia: e era egli stato in Fiorenza quattro anni, innanzi che tale opera s'allogasse. Dove non si vedendo altra opra di suo, se non questa [the relief of the mandorla; in an earlier reference in Vasari attributed "by molti" to Nanni di Banco] è sforzato ognuno a credere che ella sia piu condotta; da Jacopo che da Nanni [here he refutes the earlier attribution "by molti" to Nanni di Banco].<sup>8</sup>

He returns to this point in the Life of Nanni:

Dicono alcuni che il Frontispizio sopra la porta di Santa Maria del Fiore che v'è a' Servi, fù di sua mano, il che molto più lo farebbe degno di lode, se fosse così, per essere tal cosa certo rarissima. Ma gli altri lo attribuiscono a Jacopo della Fonte, per la maniera che vi si vede; la quale molto più è di Jacopo che di Nanni.

From all this it seems to me that we may believe that the biographer had before him the original document of commission for the models of the competition and not merely the record of the event that Ghiberti published.<sup>9</sup> This document evidently mentioned works of some importance by the Sienese sculptor in Florence which were already in existence in 1397 (it is strange that among the definite records pertaining to Jacopo not one has included the notice of any Florentine activity by him before the competition). We can deduce further that works mentioned in these documents must have been for S. Maria del Fiore, and perhaps specifically for the Porta della Mandorla,

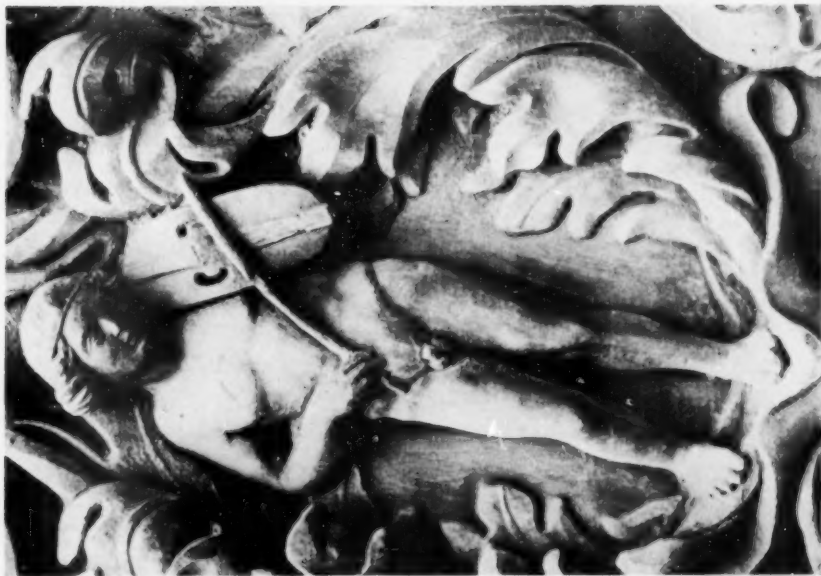
since Vasari, having given no other reasons except stylistic ones, stubbornly looks for them only there. Probably he saw in that or in another document some mention of a *storia della Vergine* or something similar, a work by Jacopo above the door, because besides the suitable stylistic reasons he adduces also the attribution of "some others." But inasmuch as the mosaic of the *Annunciation* by Ghirlandajo had by then replaced the marble group of the same subject, he concludes by recognizing the hand of the Siennese sculptor in the *Assumption* of the tympanum, which is most assuredly among the more documented and unquestionable works of Nanni di Banco.<sup>10</sup>

The young Jacopo must have come to Florence — perhaps, as Vasari said in the second edition, he left his city in 1391 — to work in a milieu that was at the moment livelier than Siena. In Florence in those years the great sculptural undertakings of S. Reparata, Or San Michele, and the Loggia dei Lanzi flourished; south Italian and foreign masters met, and works by Siennese artists had for a long time been a tradition. It would appear that he found a position with Giovanni d'Ambrogio, one of the busier masters in those undertakings and one of those, to judge from his style, who showed a closer contact with the Siennese milieu. It is probable that Jacopo left Florence after working on the frieze and while continuing with the embrasure and the architrave (1394-1395) (the visit of Piero d'Angelo to Lucca is exactly in February, 1394) and returned for a more important work. That, it would seem, produced the qualifications for the competition of the door of San Giovanni and it is, I believe, represented by the *Annunciation* now in the Cathedral Museum.

It is possible now to hazard some guesses as to the story presented by Jacopo for the competition. "In the model by Jacopo della Quercia," says Vasari, "the figures were good but had not finish (*finezza*), although made with design and diligence."<sup>11</sup> Whether or not we believe in the validity of such an appraisal, this lack of "finish," a term assuredly rare in Vasarian prose, is interpreted generally in the contemporary sense, without giving importance to what follows immediately and seems to contradict: "design and diligence." The mistrust, not seldom justified, that this edition of the *Lives* inspires in us, and a certain crudeness that pervades the late Bolognese relief by Jacopo of the same subject and that could have suggested to the biographer a somewhat fantastic posthumous judgment, encourage such an interpretation.<sup>12</sup> I am inclined instead to believe that this contradiction might only seem apparent and that Vasari ought not to be accused, at least in this case, of hastiness or carelessness. In the first edition of the life of Brunelleschi he says, still apropos



*Fig. 5. JACOPO DELLA QUERCIA, Hercules, detail from the Porta della Mandorla  
Florence, Cathedral*



*Fig. 6. JACOPO DELLA QUERCIA, Apollo, detail from the Porta della Mandorla  
Florence, Cathedral*





*Fig. 7. JACOPO DELLA QUERCIA  
Angel, detail from the Porta della Mandorla  
Florence, Cathedral*



*Fig. 8. Detail of Figure 1*



*Fig. 9. Detail of Figure 2*



of this model: "And he had a very good design and worked diligently but didn't arrange the story well by diminishing the figures, as Jacopo della Quercia had done." Here the suspicion is born that by lack of "finish" he meant an excessive simplicity of composition and absence of perspective ("to arrange well . . . to diminish the figures") rather than the other values usually attached to the word: truthfulness and beauty of proportion ("very good design") and accuracy of execution ("diligence"). The suspicion is confirmed by following this path, with the description of Ghiberti's model which possessed all the prerequisites for victory, one or another of which was lacking from those of his competitors. His model had, namely, "in its design diligence, invention, art, and the figures were very well worked." "Invention, art," here is what he must have intended, I believe, in this case, for "finish" (again changed) that at other times could also be called artifice, subtlety, ingenuity and, it seems, these were disdained by the proud young man endeavoring, like a good Siennese, for effects of grace and rhythm, but never losing a profound, basic force.

In conclusion, I deduce that the model, placed between the works for the Florentine door and the tomb of Ilaria del Carretto, not only expresses the force of a concealed drama through this plastic vigor, which Jacopo's works never lack, but might also have been accommodated to a sense of neatness and of elegance, more suitable than the rest to the nature of a youth of his type. The adolescent nude of Isaac, worked with the delicacy and care of the Hercules and the Apollo of the embrasure, would have compared well in the matter of classical purity to the figures by the two famous contestants that we admire. Besides, like the embrasure of the door with a relief in small dimensions for more of an arcadian effect, and without the narrow prescriptions of traditional grandiosity, a breath of gothicism would have been given to it, more subtly idyllic and imaginative than appears in the last part of the embrasure. In regard to the work of Jacopo, I believe that some problems must be examined in the light of Florentine works now restored to him. What fountains of inspiration are thus uncovered! What complexity of feeling is so strongly affirmed!

In Siena, his birthplace, Jacopo could have studied at leisure Nicola and Giovanni Pisano; he would have had access to any antique piece. The Gothic culture still continued there in its more refined aura. Pisa, which he certainly knew, offered also works by Nicola and Giovanni and a number of antique examples which had already impressed his great forerunners. But a true novelty in this sculpture is the renewal of the relations to the Gothic that he could

have found nowhere in Tuscany except in the Florentine artistic milieu. This is just the milieu represented in the livelier, more synthetic style of the architectural-decorative complex of the last north door of S. Maria del Fiore to which the young Sienese contributed the more beautiful and significant reliefs and statues.<sup>18</sup>

To localize, to circumscribe a milieu is what should content us, it seems to me, rather than pretending to single out a true and specific master, save when handling artists of such force that they immediately can be identified as these very masters and not merely isolated followers. I have attempted to secure confirmation of the Florentine works of Jacopo by the importance generally attributed to him in the development of the current fifteenth century sculpture which is a direct descendent of the Gothic. I believe I could add that Donatello was, up to a certain point, a borrower in his beginnings. The words of Vasari in the second part of the *Life* (first and second ed.) thus have a deeper meaning than they seemed when, concluding the introduction, he solemnly announces that he has "selected Jacopo above all for honored leader of his second part."

<sup>18</sup> My study on this reconstruction of the first works of Jacopo della Quercia, written in the winter of 1950-1951, will be published in the review *Belle Arti* in the spring. The present article avoids repetition.

<sup>19</sup> The construction of the Porta della Mandorla in its definitive form was begun in 1391 and can be divided chronologically into three phases. During the first, which interests us at the moment, they got as far as striking the arch and executing the embrasure frizze, the band within the corbel and the architrave (Poggi, *Il duomo di Firenze*, Berlin, 1909, pp. LXVIII ff. and 64 ff., with pertinent documents). On the basis of the documents these parts were executed by 1396. In the second half of that year two small statues of prophets and the necessary tabernacles for crowning the door jambs were commissioned from Lorenzo di Giovanni d'Ambrogio. He was paid in full for this work in July, 1397. In that year, for which the deliberations of the workshop for the whole first half are lost, the two statues of the *Annunciation* destined for the lunette can reasonably be dated. During the delay in constructing the arch (which was executed in the second phase of the work) they were provisionally placed in the interior of the Cathedral (this is dealt with in more detail in note 1 of my other study). The maximum height of the opening of the lunette in which these stood for a certain time is 2.28 m.; the angel is 1.32 m. high, the Madonna 1.40 m. The state of preservation of the two figures is good. Only the face of the Virgin has not kept the beautiful patina which we see in that of the angel. In both, the fingers are largely or completely restored; less in the left hand of the Virgin, in which only the little finger and small part of the ring finger are redone; in the left hand of the angel the thumb is intact. On the angel the point of the diadem is also restored. Unfortunately, the placing of the statues makes full-face photographs impossible. These would have been especially interesting for the angel. The photographs published here, by the Gabinetto fotografico della Soprintendenza alle Gallerie di Firenze, were taken by Dr. Marchini, whom I thank most warmly.

<sup>20</sup> I refer to the various attributions proposed in the literature on this sculpture in note 2 of the study cited. Here I limit myself to consideration of those in which a basis can still be recognized.

<sup>21</sup> The statuette at the top of the first northern door, called dei Cornacchini (or better, at the top of the tympanum of a window whose lower part is over the door), that I believe identifiable with the *Annunciate* by Jacopo di Piero Guidi, is reproduced in the article in *Belle Arti* (for the documents pertinent see Poggi, *op. cit.*, pp. 11, 12, nos. 57, 58, 63). The style of this sculptor, well-known for his work for S. Maria del Fiore and for the Loggia dei Lanzi, is quite different from that of the master who interests us, and, like the rest of the sculptors of that period in Florence, of a much inferior level.

<sup>5</sup> Only two pieces of the embrasure frieze are clearly specified in the documentary notes of S. Maria del Fiore: that of payment to Giovanni d'Ambrogio in May, 1393, 2 *braccia* and one *ottavo* long (1.24 m.) and that of payment to Niccolò Lamberti in June of the same year, 2 *braccia* and 7 *ottavi* long (1.68 m.). The latter is easily identified as the first lower part of the right embrasure. The measurement corresponds and the style is that of Lamberti. The other might be identified by a comparison of measurements or by elimination, were it possible to recognize in the embrasure frieze the hands of the other three masters that we know assisted in the decoration of the door. But the style, as I have suggested, is very different from that presented by the other documented works by Giovanni d'Ambrogio (the *Justice and Prudence* of the Loggia dei Lanzi; the left door jamb with the corbel and the left part of the architrave of the Porta della Mandorla) and it is, on the other hand, more suitable for an artist of his generation (see all the article in *Belle Arti*). As for the measure of this stone, it is interesting to note that it is 1.30 m. up to the horizontal joint on the cornice and 1.18 m. up to the vertex of the hexagon below (work of Piero Tedesco) that is wedged in the foliage. Evidently for a fair payment in the case of pieces completely horizontal at the joint, a median is arrived at. The section in the lower part of the left side of the embrasure (1.64 m. long) must have been executed in 1397, the year for which the deliberations of the Cathedral workshop were lost. The photographs of the two angels below are by Brogi; the others were executed for me by the Gabinetto fotografico della Soprintendenza alle Gallerie di Firenze. For complete views of the two sections of the frieze and for their location on the door, see Brogi photographs no. 4185, 4949, 4950, 4952, 4953; and Alinari no. 1939.

<sup>6</sup> Also, if as is suspected, this representation of the Virgin originated from an incorrect interpretation of the subject of some antique fragment (for examples of errors of interpretation in regard to antique civilization in medieval culture see E. R. Curtius, *Europäische Literatur und lateinisches Mittelalter*, Berne, 1948, p. 409 f. in bibl.), it remains an uncommon iconographic boldness.

<sup>7</sup> These impressions of mine will not seem exaggerated to one who has seen the original close up, even summarily.

<sup>8</sup> *Life of Jacopo della Quercia*, 1st ed.

<sup>9</sup> Frey (*Il Codice Magliabechiano*, Berlin, 1892, p. 274) also agrees with this.

<sup>10</sup> I suppose this might be a case of giving importance to the comma between *anni* and *innanzi* (for carelessness in punctuation compare, for example, the semicolon between *condotta* and *da Jacopo*) and that it must have meant that Jacopo was found in Florence four years before the competition, occurring in 1397. I should like to account for the comma as meaning that in an undetermined period before the competition Jacopo had spent four years in Florence. Bacchi, who refutes this notice as unfounded, not acknowledging that Vasari got it from a reliable source, interprets it as from 1396 to 1401 (*Francesco di Valdambrino, emulo del Ghiberti e collaboratore di Jacopo della Quercia*, Florence, 1936, p. 32). In the second edition Vasari adheres to the notice of four years and maintains for Jacopo the attribution of the Assumption over the door, saying: "Questa opera fu condotta in quattro anni." It appears to me that we cannot neglect as support for the attribution to Jacopo of the group of the *Annunciation* the fact that Richa (*Notizie storiche della chiesa fiorentina*, VI, 1757, 25) says the Madonna and the angels of the lunette of the neighboring Porta dei Cornacchini are by him.

<sup>11</sup> *Life of Ghiberti*, second ed.

<sup>12</sup> I followed that when I wrote the article for *Belle Arti*.

<sup>13</sup> For some observations on the milieu of the Porta della Mandorla see my study in *Belle Arti*.



*Fig. 1. JOHN WOLLASTON, Girl with Dog in Landscape  
Ownership Unknown*



*Fig. 2. JOHN WOLLASTON, Sir Thomas Hales, Bart.  
Ownership Unknown*

## JOHN WOLLASTON (FL. 1736-1767): A COSMOPOLITAN PAINTER IN THE BRITISH COLONIES

By GEORGE C. GROCE

OUTSIDE of New England, the influence of John Wollaston of London on painting in His Majesty's Colonies in North America was greater than that of any English artist of the period prior to the Revolutionary War. Quantitatively speaking, there are about three hundred known paintings by this artist. This is roughly equal to the combined total *oeuvre* of his contemporaries in America: John Smibert (1688-1751); Robert Feke (b.c. 1705, d.c. 1750) and Joseph Blackburn (in America 1752-1763).<sup>1</sup> All these artists, however, were in America much longer than the decade Wollaston spent here. In Annapolis, Philadelphia and Charleston, Wollaston received press notices which were as laudatory as his public patronage was large.

The background of Wollaston in England and the state of painting in the American colonies from New York to Charleston is sufficient to account for both his popularity and his influence. Since very little attention has been paid to Wollaston's English background, that will be discussed at the outset.<sup>2</sup>

According to an inscription on the reverse of his portrait of William Smith of New York City, John Wollaston was a Londoner.<sup>3</sup> Charles Willson Peale recorded that Wollaston was trained under a London drapery painter;<sup>4</sup> and, most important of all, Horace Walpole records that John Woolaston (c. 1672-c. 1743), a London portrait painter and amateur violinist, had a son who became a portrait painter.<sup>5</sup> Since there is every reason to believe this son to have been our John Wollaston and no evidence to the contrary, the younger artist is generally believed to have been this son. Generally Americans who were unfamiliar with the spelling of his name which Wollaston preferred, spelled the name "Woolaston" and this suggests that the proper pronunciation of the artist's name was and is "Woolaston"—another reason for believing that the violinist-limner was our artist's father.<sup>6</sup>

When or where Wollaston was born is unknown but c. 1710 is as good a conjectural birth date as any.<sup>6</sup> But there is little if any doubt that Wollaston was a Londoner and a member of the "London School" of painting. London was at once the major training center and the outstanding British art market

during Wollaston's formative years. The term "London School" implies no degree of insularity, but rather a center where a capable artist like William Hogarth (1697-1764) might learn the techniques of painting (which had originated in the Italian Renaissance and spread to the art centers of Europe). From a list of eighteen artists, selected at random and on whom adequate data is available—and who were painting before Wollaston left England about 1749, sixteen of them were either trained abroad or under masters who had been trained on the Continent.<sup>7</sup> The odds were therefore about nine to one that Wollaston received training from a master fully grounded in the cosmopolitan tradition.

Also, London abounded in artists' studios, print shops, coffee houses, and artists' clubs for the interchange of ideas. Formerly, there had been Sir Godfrey Kneller's (1648-1723) Academy of Painting, succeeded later by that of Sir James Thornhill (1676-1734) and of the latter's pupil and son-in-law William Hogarth. Even Wollaston's first known painting has nothing of the primitive or folk art in it. The tone may be English, but the concept and execution are cosmopolitan, not provincial.

This painting, signed and dated John Wollaston 1736, is a 50" x 40" portrait of a little girl with a dog in a landscape (Fig. 1).<sup>8</sup> The entire painting lacks both fluency and assurance but none the less is meticulously painted. The fabrics are rendered with especial competence. The modeling of the eyes, nose, lips and ear is as characteristic of Wollaston as those he painted on the charming *Miss Gibbes* thirty-one years later (Fig. 8). The spaniel or poodle in the right foreground has the conventional look of a fugitive from a print after Sir Godfrey Kneller.<sup>9</sup> In the left background are a row of trees, which could have come from almost any baronial park in Europe, and also the conventional fountain playing. The same fountain and row of trees were used repeatedly in America. The basket of flowers, reminiscent of Dutch floral pieces, was similarly used by Wollaston as "props" in America.

Charles Willson Peale's statement that Wollaston received some training under a "noted drapery painter in London,"<sup>8</sup> is much less impressive evidence than the whole body of Wollaston's work. Even after the passage of two hundred years the sheen of his satins, the soft warmth of his velvets, and the delicate pattern of his laces are memorable.<sup>10</sup> True, Wollaston was most at home in brown, even in eyes and hair, but in women's dresses, or even men's coats (which are generally brown velvet) he could and did use almost every color with great skill and charm. Seen in their true colors, Wollaston's fabrics,



including every color, are so thoroughly delightful that we do not wonder at his popularity. Black and white prints do outrage to the work of an artist who thought and worked and felt in terms of colors and their values.

From first to last Wollaston was essentially a "drapery" painter; hence that term and even Peale's phrase "a noted drapery painter" must be defined. To begin with the "drapery" painter did the costume, made the composition, including the background, leaving his master to paint the face and exact the fee. None of the face painters—or "phiz-mongers" as they were derisively called—was likely to advertise the virtues of his "drapery" painters. These could be "noted" only within the profession itself.

The best qualified drapery painter of Wollaston's time was Joseph van Aken (b. 1709—d. July 4, 1749), who came to London from Antwerp. Allan Ramsay, Thomas Hudson, Hamlet Winstanley, and a few others, paid Van Aken so well that he became wealthy enough to acquire an art collection of his own.<sup>11</sup> Hamlet Winstanley went to Lancashire, painted oil-on-canvas portraits of faces of sitters, dispatched these to Van Aken who, on Winstanley's return, had the faces skillfully composed in elegant family groupings.

George Vertue (1684-1756), the English antiquary and engraver, observed in his secret notes that Van Aken could paint faces, history, and compositions of infinite variety, but that this artist was especially gifted in his free and "Genteel" manner of "pencilling Silks, Sattins, Velvets, Gold laceings, carvings, &c."<sup>11</sup> The latter "draperies" were precisely those in which John Wollaston excelled. Moreover, when Peale arrived in England, Van Aken was at the height of his fame—but it was a fame so limited that today, even in the most compendious dictionary of artists, there is no mention of Van Aken's name.

Finally, no painting by Wollaston between 1736 and 1742 has yet come to light. But by 1744 the essential attributes of Wollaston's American painting are clearly evident. Even the most casual comparison of Figures 1, 2, 3 and 4 shows unmistakably that Wollaston had mastered the tricks of the trade of painting by 1744. Of course this does not prove he had been painting draperies, but certainly the facts strongly suggest it. There is another anecdote which also suggests Wollaston did some drapery painting for Sir Joshua Reynolds at one time.<sup>12</sup>

There is a freak, uninscribed Wollaston painting which suggests that in 1742 Wollaston may himself have had the help of a drapery painter. This is the portrait of *George Whitefield Preaching*, owned by the National Portrait Gallery of London. A print of it is inscribed "John Wollaston, Jr. Pinxt. 1742

... John Faber fecit." This is the only figure composition known to us by Wollaston. I suggest that two hands may be involved here because Whitefield's flowing clerical robes are not highlighted and his fingers are wraith-like, while the lighting on the pulpit and congregation is contradictory. But Wollaston gave Whitefield the cross eyes which the evangelist actually had, and so skillfully portrayed the lady in the foreground that she is as characteristic, especially in her elegantly postured finger tips, as any Wollaston ever seen.<sup>18</sup>

The other portraits painted by Wollaston before he departed for America are thoroughly of a piece with those he did after his arrival here. *Sir Thomas Hales, Bart.* (c. 1665-1748), inscribed and dated 1744 (Fig. 2) is as characteristic a Wollaston portrait as one could find. The table is essentially the same as that of *Joseph Turner* of Philadelphia, painted about 1758, and of *Ann Gibbes* (Fig. 8), painted in 1767. Hales' dark velvet coat, with the easy zigzag highlights, the protruding white stock, the white linen cuffs, the skillfully rendered wig, the elegant fingers in unnatural poses, are equally characteristic of Wollaston's work.

*Thomas Appleford*, signed and dated 1746, has been discussed and reproduced previously. This portrait of the English period shows almost every attribute of Wollaston's bust portraits: brown velvet coat with easy highlights; expertly curled wig; characteristic white stock or jabot; dark eyes; a well-fed, well-pleased look, with a solid brown background.<sup>2</sup>

*Mrs. David Garrick* (1724-1822) (Fig. 3) wears the lace cap seen on fully half of the ladies painted by Wollaston at New York. The twin peaks on the cap, with perhaps a touch of color—say pink—were pointed out as Wollaston attributes by the late William Sawitzky. The New York ladies wore stomachers like the child in Figure 1, with adornment of various types. This lady's dress is blue—a favorite color for his ladies' clothing—but it could have been yellow, old rose, brown, or almost any color of the rainbow. Wollaston's characteristic leaves appear in the upper right background. These leaves were used in portraits from London to South Carolina; in the portrait of *Mrs. Charles Carroll* of Maryland (Fig. 5) the brown, rubber-plant-type leaves are on the sitter's right. The black band around the throat was also a sort of trademark for Wollaston, though not so much so after he left New York.

Whether the *Naval Officer* (Fig. 4) is Samuel Hood Hood (1724-1810) need not concern us here. The fingers, the white linen ruffles, the brown coat,

the protruding stock appear in *Hales*, *Hood* and *Appleford*. This is the first military or naval figure we have noted. Wollaston's braid, his sword, his ships' rigging, even the finest niceties of distinctive regimental uniforms were done with expert skill and technical knowledge. But that would make a study of its own.

Thus, before leaving England, Wollaston was using the "prop" table and flower baskets; the men wore white protruding stocks, brown velvet coats with zigzag highlights, the fingers were genteel and delicately but awkwardly postured. In fact, Wollaston showed little if any knowledge of the bones and muscles of the human anatomy. The men's shoulders frequently had a narrow, drooping appearance, about which the robust Sir William Johnson of New York complained. The feminine bosom was usually affixed at the sides, leaving room for the suggestion of a third bosom just over the breast bone (Fig. 3, 5 and 8).

Wollaston, in 1748, was mentioned among about fifty artists practicing in England.<sup>14</sup> The long war of the Austrian Succession finally reached its close in October, 1748, with the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle. Hogarth, Hudson and Van Aken departed at once for the art galleries of the Continent, and were clapped in the Bastille because the final formalities of the Peace had not been concluded.<sup>15</sup> Wollaston, who had ample opportunities to learn of American conditions, was in no such unseemly haste. The peace was not ceremonially proclaimed at New York City until May 12, 1749. After the

Royal Healths were drank; the evening was concluded with mirth, most of the houses being illuminated, [two of which] strove to outvie each other in their Demonstration of Joy.<sup>16</sup>

The presence of John Wollaston in New York City was first noted as a witness for the government in a tavern brawl which took place shortly thereafter on June 23, 1749.<sup>17</sup>

Despite this initial inadvertence at politics, Wollaston had a fair field to cultivate, and he made the most of his opportunities. John Smibert was painting in New England when Wollaston arrived; Joseph Blackburn, an English artist, worked in the New England Colonies from 1752-1763; Robert Feke had done well at Philadelphia about 1746 and was still active in New England. Gustavus Hesselius and the eccentric William Williams were doing business at Philadelphia from about 1746 to the middle 1750's.

But New York had never had a really fashionable painter who worked with fluency and assurance until Wollaston arrived.<sup>18</sup> Maryland had not, so

far as we know, had a professional artist since Justus Englehardt Kuhn's departure about 1717, except the wandering and unstable Gustavus Hesselius. The same may be said of Virginia after the disappearance of Charles Bridges about 1740. It was to New York that Wollaston went first and then to Maryland and Virginia. Philadelphia and Charleston came later for different reasons.

About three hundred paintings by Wollaston are known and of this number seventy-five are of New York sitters. Portraits of *Mr. and Mrs. Brandt Schuyler* were painted, signed and dated 1750; as mentioned, *William Smith, Jr.'s* likeness was signed and dated 1751, that of *Mrs. Philip Livingston* (Catherine van Brugh) was signed and dated "John Wollaston, 1752."<sup>19</sup> In addition to these, members of the families of Beekman, Colden, Sir William Johnson, Henry Lloyd, Morris, a half-dozen of the Philipse family of the Yonkers manor which bears their name, Stillwell, Van Cortlandt, Walton, Watts, and other distinguished New York families sat to Wollaston's brush. No one in the colony ever had painted so much or as well.

On April 1, 1752 the vestry of Trinity Church voted to ask Wollaston to copy the portrait of a former rector, the Reverend William Vesey (1674-1746).<sup>20</sup> No painting by Wollaston of Vesey is known to exist. Wollaston's chronology from April 1, 1752 is blank until he appeared at Annapolis, Maryland in the spring of 1753. There was time enough to go home and return during that period.

There are reasons to assume that he went home either to the marriage of a daughter to an English East India merchant, Mr. Amyatt, or in some manner to strengthen his connections with the inner workings of the East India Company. Since Charles Willson Peale tells most of what is known, it seems best to quote him directly:

Wollaston visited Annapolis [c. 1755] and painted a number of portraits of the first families in that city. He had some instructions from a noted drapery painter in London, and soon after took his passage to New York, from thence he visited all the principal towns painting, to Charleston, S. Carolina and from thence he returned to England. I was in London when he returned from the East Indies very rich. He carried to the East Indies two daughters, one or both of them married and thus acquired great fortunes. They died, and the father, soon after he arrived in London, went to Bath where I believe he died.<sup>3</sup>

In 1753 a young man named Robert Clive (1725-1774) returned to England for a rest but was greeted with public plaudits and much honor. He had

entered the East India Company's service as a "writer" in his nineteenth year, but in 1747 he had quitted the civil for the military service. His dazzling feats of arms and also his astute mind did much to place the star of the British Indies high in the ascendant.

Perhaps Wollaston went home to attend his daughter's marriage to Mr. Amyatt of the East India Company. Perhaps he went to meet the intrepid and resourceful Robert Clive or mayhap to seek a remunerative place in India. He could have done all three.

One objective fact is certain. Queue ribbons had never fluttered at the back of the neck of any New York gentleman in his portraits, but now the protruding white stock of his English and New York gentlemen gave way to the two ruffles beneath the chin which adorned his Marylanders and Virginians, such as appear on *Richard Randoiph, Jr.* (Fig. 7). Note also that *Mrs. Charles Carroll* of Maryland (Fig. 5) has a wasp waist, no stomacher, no lace cap, no neck adornment, as well as blonde hair and blue eyes. She wears a characteristically Wollaston blue-green dress faced with white satin. In other words, there is a break between the costumes of New Yorkers and those of the two Potomac River Colonies. In any case, there is much to suggest a visit home by Wollaston in 1752-1753.

However, the next firm date in Wollaston's chronology is found in the *Annapolis Maryland Gazette* dated March 15, 1753. But before quoting the poem in praise of John Wollaston which appeared in that issue, a few explanatory words are in order. In those days there was an endemic of newspaper poesy in Great Britain and her colonies. It was a custom to invoke the muse, smite the lyre and indite a strophe, or better still, a rhapsody on the ineffable beauties of Art. George Vertue's *Notes* in five volumes and the two manuscript and clipping volumes compiled by Horace Walpole, now in the Folger Library, abound with this sort of rhetoric, which makes anything written about Wollaston in America look like pallid simperings of understatement. The author of the following stanzas is probably a congenitally pseudonymous personage, connected in some way with St. John's College at Annapolis.



# EXTEMPORE:

On seeing Mr. WOLLASTON'S Pictures in Annapolis

By Dr. T. T.

Behold the won'drous Power of Art!  
That mocks devouring Time and Death,  
Can Nature's ev'ry Charm impart;  
And make the lifeless Canvas Breathe.  
The Lilly blended with the Rose,  
Blooms gaily on each fertile Cheek.  
Their Eyes the sparkling Gems disclose,  
And balmy Lips, too, seem to speak.

Nature and We, must bless the Hand,  
That can such heav'nly Charms portray,  
And save the Beauties of this Land  
From envious Obscurity.  
Whilst on each Piece we gaze,  
In various Wonder, we are lost;  
And know not justly which to praise,  
Or Nature, Or the Painter, most.<sup>21</sup>

This is the first Maryland date for Wollaston. The last is August, 1754, when he painted a portrait of little *Rebecca Calvert*, now in the Baltimore Museum of Art. During his residence he painted portraits of fifty-five Marylanders, including not only members of the Calvert and Carroll families but also those of the Boardley, Digges, Dorsey, Dulaney, Galloway, John, Key, Plater and other families of equal note.

There are strong traditions but there is no complete proof that Wollaston was in Virginia by 1755. He certainly was there as late as October 21, 1757, for on that day he received from Martha Custis fifty-six pistoles for the three pictures of the Custis family now at Washington and Lee University. Note that Wollaston preferred and received hard cash rather than the paper colonial currency.<sup>22</sup> He was in Virginia long enough to paint about a hundred extant portraits, of which about thirty-five were Randolphs. But he did not overlook the Bollings, Byrds, Carters, Custises, Lightfoots, Meades, Pages, Tayloes and Walthoes.

An interesting phase in the "Americanization" of John Wollaston was that he painted in the foreground of a portrait of *John Page* (1744-1808), (owned by William and Mary College) not the conventional dead pheasants of Europe but American bob-white quail. The breech mechanism of young Page's fowling piece is so meticulously painted that a gunsmith today could make the weapon in replica from the painting.<sup>23</sup>

Assuming he received the customary generous Southern hospitality and was paid in hard money, Wollaston was obviously turning a pretty penny by his portrait painting. He was no longer dealing with the comparatively thrifty Dutch and Scots of New York but with lavish, free-handed and bibulous Southern planter groups. Why should he have left them? There were large amounts of money as well as diversions to be had. We know of about one



Wollaston in New York for every thousand of population there. And compared to the hard-riding, hard-swearing, extravagant Southern gentry, the upper class New Yorkers were a group of money-making, highly-cultivated skin-flints. But in the South, where life was easy, Wollaston, judging by contemporary population estimates, had, in his portrait painting, barely skimmed the cream from the reservoir.<sup>24</sup>

However, if we note what was happening in India and the London offices of the British East India Company, the reasons for Wollaston's withdrawal from Virginia and from America become apparent. In India the young, fearless, melancholy Clive had, by an astonishing, even unprecedented, series of military victories raised British power to predominance. In January, 1757, he had invested Fort William, near Calcutta, and in the same momentous year had forced the capitulation of Chandernagore and exacted prize money of £130,000. On June 23, 1757, at the village of Plassey in Bengal, with 900 European and 2100 Indian troops, Clive had routed an Indian army of 18,000 horse and 50,000 foot. To the victors the ever-gallant and generous colonel distributed £1,500,000 in gold, silver and jewels.<sup>25</sup>

Additional manpower was required at once to administer these newly-won territories and their untold wealth. In London on November 11, 1757, John Wollaston was appointed a "writer" for the Bengal establishment of the British East India Company.<sup>26</sup> This was exactly the type of appointment which initially brought Clive to India. No matter how or when Wollaston received his orders, we can readily understand how Wollaston would set off at once for Philadelphia. It afforded the most likely opportunity for an early sailing to the British Isles, Gibraltar, or a convenient Continental port. Since the Seven Years' War (1756-1763) was well under way, transportation aboard an armed vessel, which might most readily be found at Philadelphia,<sup>21</sup> was certainly desirable.

Probably he arrived in Philadelphia before June, 1758, for Colonel Henry Bouquet, whose portrait Wollaston painted, had left that city for the battle-front in June. By the end of July he and his forces were within a hundred miles of the enemy at Fort Duquesne.<sup>27</sup> We know of only about a dozen portraits painted at Philadelphia by Wollaston, including members of such families as Chew, Coxse, Oswald, Peters, Plumstead, Swift, and Turner. Every sitter could have been painted in a few weeks or a few months. There was quite enough opportunity here for Wollaston, had not greater opportunity summoned elsewhere.

Presumably Wollaston was well on his way to India in March, 1759, when

his name occurs again as a "writer" in the London office of the British East India Company. In September of the same year he was in charge of bringing an essential ingredient of gunpowder to Chinsura near Calcutta. The following year (August 18, 1760), Wollaston had become a magistrate in a court of Calcutta and was asking instructions for deciding cases involving more than five hundred rupees.<sup>26</sup> This particular record terminates with hundreds of rupees at Wollaston's fingertips and six lush years ahead of him in India.

One thing is sure, that while Wollaston was in the East he made more impression on American painting than he made money in all the fabled opulence of India. Peculiarly, Wollaston's influence was most profound after he had left America. James Thomas Flexner has recently shown how, prior to Wollaston's arrival, West was influenced by prints and by an eccentric amateur named William Williams.<sup>28</sup> William Sawitzky has shown how young Benjamin West (1738-1820) revolutionized his style to conform with that of Wollaston.

Fortunately a poem by young Francis Hopkinson dated September 18, 1758,<sup>18</sup> shows something of the impact of Wollaston's proficiency on this young artist, musician, gentleman and patriot. Hopkinson describes Wollaston as "a face painter whose name is sufficiently known in the world," which certainly was true when it was written. The verse is too long to quote here in full. In part Hopkinson writes:

Oftimes with wonder and delight I stand  
To view th' amazing conduct of your hand.  
At first unlabored sketches lightly trace  
The glimm'ring outlines of a human face:  
Then by degrees the liquid life o'erflows  
Each rising feature — the rich canvas glows  
With heightened charms — the forehead rises fair  
And, glossy ringlets twine the nut-brown hair;  
The sparkling eyes give meaning to the whole,  
And seem to speak the dictates of a soul;  
The lucid lips in rosy sweetness drest,  
The well turned neck and luxuriant breast.  
The silk that richly glows with graceful air —  
All tell the hand of Wollaston was there.

The poet then addressed himself to young Benjamin West:

may'st thou ever tread  
The pleasing paths thy *Wollaston* has lead. [*sic*]  
Let his just precepts all your works refine,  
Copy each grace, and learn like him to shine.<sup>29</sup>



Fig. 3. JOHN WOLLASTON, Presumed Portrait of Mrs. David Garrick  
(Eva Marie Violett)  
Ownership Unknown



Fig. 4. JOHN WOLLASTON, Naval Officer "Viscount Samuel Hood Hood"



Fig. 5. JOHN WOLLASTON, *Mrs. Charles Carroll of Annapolis*  
Mrs. Caroline Pennington Collection



Fig. 6. JOHN WOLLASTON, *Nathaniel Marston*  
Museum of the City of New York

Hopkinson's admonitions were not enough. West went to seek his fortunes at New York but, confronted on all sides by Wollaston portraits done in the cosmopolitan manner, West returned to Philadelphia whence he sailed for Leghorn, Italy, in 1760. He learned the cosmopolitan techniques so quickly that he was in London by 1763 and soon became court painter to King George III and succeeded Sir Joshua Reynolds as president of the Royal Academy. For the next generation, Americans came to learn the art of painting from this ever-generous native of their country.

In Maryland, John Hesselius (1728-1778), surrounded on all sides by Wollaston's paintings, came to model his own work so closely on that of the English artist that there still exists confusion of Hesselius' work with that of Wollaston. Meanwhile, Charles Willson Peale (1741-1827), bartered Hesselius a saddle for the privilege of watching the older man paint a portrait. Peale was, of course, familiar with Wollaston's own work at first hand.<sup>30</sup> After seeing Smibert's work in Boston, Peale too, set off for study under West—arriving at London in February, 1767, and reaching Annapolis, after two years' study, in June, 1769.

Another Philadelphian who was influenced by Wollaston's painting was Matthew Pratt (1734-1805). Pratt's *Benjamin Franklin* shows strong Wollaston influence.<sup>31</sup> Pratt, too, went to learn the Continental tradition under West and to apply it in elegant American portraiture, painted in delightful shades of violet and purple.

Some time between 1763 and 1767 Abraham Delanoy, a young New York "vintner" who lived where the Wollastons were thickest, set off to study painting under West. After this tutelage he set up shop in 1768 at Charleston, but returned to New York in 1731.<sup>32</sup>

John Mare was something more than a copyist of Wollaston. His copy of Wollaston's portrait of *Henry Lloyd I* (1685-1763) is scrupulously literal in every detail. But in Mare's copy of a supposed portrait of *Robert Henry Livingston*, he went beyond the literal and painted in Livingston's bust-length background the dark green-brown he had found in Lloyd's background. I believe I have seen well over half of the American Wollastons. I never saw a bust picture by him except with a solid brown background or lighter brown spandrels. Mare had imagination. He is the creator of the most celebrated house-fly in American art history.<sup>33</sup>

We know nothing for certain about John Wollaston until he reappeared in Charleston, South Carolina in 1767. But we do know something about his

daughters. The first Mr. Amyatt, husband of Wollaston's daughter, got £11,366 in spoils from one operation alone in 1757.<sup>84</sup> This sum, in addition to such other wealth as he had acquired, would presumably have passed to his wife after his death about 1764. In a letter from Lord Clive to his wife, dated January 31, 1766, Clive mentioned the marriage of Mrs. Amyatt's sister to General John Carnac.<sup>85</sup> In the *Gentleman's Magazine* (vol. XXXVI) for September, 1766, it was announced on page 438 that Brigadier-General Carnac had been married to Miss Woolaston (*sic*) in the East Indies. General Carnac (1716-1800) came of old East India stock. In 1765 Carnac got £32,666 from one operation. By 1767 he had returned to England, had acquired several extensive estates in Hampshire and by 1768 was a member of Parliament from Leominster.<sup>86</sup> By 1777, Carnac's bride of 1766 was dead, for in that year a portrait of *Mrs. John Carnac* (née Miss Revett) painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds, was engraved by J. R. Smith.<sup>86</sup> What happened to Mrs. James Amyatt is not known but her husband became a member of Parliament for Southampton about 1784.<sup>84</sup>

The whole air of Wollaston was different at Charleston. He was a happier man and his work showed in its most felicitous vein. *Polly Golightly*,<sup>87</sup> adorned with jewels and autumnal asters and a flirtatious hat, is probably the most delectable of any Wollaston lady of my acquaintance. Or, consider the excellent taste of the profusion of gems and the light lace collarette on *Miss Gibbes* (Fig. 8). The dark velvet band characteristic of his New York portraits had no place upon a Charleston throat. But his stay was so brief that we have but twenty Charleston portraits.

On January 14, 1767, Eliza Lucas Pinckney wrote her daughter, "Wollaston has summoned me today to put the finish stroke to my shadow" [or portrait].<sup>88</sup> A portrait of *Ann Gibbes* of Charleston is inscribed "Wollaston Fecit 1767." In the *South Carolina Gazette* for January 19 - February 2, 1767, Wollaston extended thanks to his patrons, announced his plans to return to England, stated that he had "a very good waiting boy to sell and a pleasant saddle horse." On April 7, 1767, Wollaston, with two other gentlemen, was a dinner guest in the home of Mrs. Gabriel Manigault.<sup>89</sup> The *South Carolina Gazette* for May 11 - June 1, 1767, carried the announcement that the "celebrated Limner," John Wollaston had sailed aboard the *Snow Portland* for London on May 31.<sup>90</sup>

It is significant that Wollaston's safe arrival in England is recorded by Charles Willson Peale, a pupil first in America of Wollaston's most sedulous



imitator, John Hesselius<sup>30</sup> and at that time living abroad as a student of Woolaston's most illustrious pupil, Benjamin West.<sup>31</sup>

What happened after that is a mystery which is well worth solving.

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Henry Wilder Foote in his *Robert Foke* (1930) lists seventy extant portraits by that artist; in his *John Smibert* (1950) he lists 102 Smiberts; the Lawrence Park, H. W. Foote and J. H. Morgan *Catalogue of Blackburn*, published by the American Antiquarian Society, lists 130 works by that artist. Dr. Foote and the present writer have enjoyed discussing this situation.

<sup>2</sup> The standard work on John Woolaston is by Theodore Bolton and Harry L. Binsie in *The Antiquarian*, XVIII (June, 1931), 30-33 and 50-52. I have written a small article on "Thomas Appleford by John Woolaston," *New York Historical Society Quarterly*, XXXIV (Oct., 1950), 261-68. In it are illustrated Appleford (1746) and William Smith, Jr. (1751) and four Woolastons owned by the Society. The 1941 *Portraits Catalogue* of the Society illustrates nine portraits by Woolaston, five ladies and four gentlemen.

<sup>3</sup> Letter of Charles Willson Peale to Rembrandt Peale, Oct. 28, 1812, in John Sartain's *Reminiscences of a Very Old Man* (1899), p. 147.

<sup>4</sup> Because so little has been recorded about the senior John Woolaston (b.c. 1672-d.c. 1743) the following chronology is appended. It is based mainly on a *Catalogue of Engraved Portraits in the British Museum* (5 vols.) (1908-1925); George Vertue's *Notes* (5 vols.) and Horace Walpole, *Anecdotes of Painting in England* . . . , 2d ed., Strawberry-Hill, England, 4 vols., 1765. Vertue and Horace Walpole state J. Woolaston was born about 1672 and that he died an old man in the Charter House. The records of this home for gentlemen pensioners were destroyed in the blitz of World War II. Woolaston's earliest signed portrait is that of Thomas Britten, dated 1703, now in the National Portrait Gallery. Britten was a dealer in small coal in London's slums, whose concerts were attended by the gentry and nobility of London. Walpole noted that in 1704 Woolaston was at Covent Garden, a center of much of London's art life. In 1709 John Faber engraved Woolaston's portrait of John Nesbitt (1661-1727), a Calvinist divine of London; a portrait of the portrait of John Sherburne, of New England is owned by Mr. John Henry Sherburne and located in the home of his daughter, Mrs. John Reidy, 92 High Street, Brookline, Mass. The painting is inscribed "John Woolaston p. 1709/10 Warwick Court, in Warwick Lane in London." (Information on this portrait is by Dr. Henry Wilder Foote and Mrs. Haven Parker.) It is the only painting by the senior Woolaston known to be in the United States. Samuel Rosewell, a London dissenting minister, was probably painted and engraved before his death in 1722; similarly, the non-conformist theologians, Nathaniel Spinckes (1653-1727) and William Tong (1662-1727), who both died in the same year, 1727. Henry Grove, still another Woolaston sitter who was engraved, died in 1738. The younger Woolaston's name was inscribed Jr., in 1742 on a painting of George Whitfield preaching, indicating that the father was then living. John Faber [Jr.], whose father was deceased, engraved the plate of this painting (original in the National Portrait Gallery) but omitted the Junior. Woolaston had dropped the Junior from his signature when he painted Thomas Hales and Admiral Lestock in 1744 and 1746. Hence, indications are that at the age of about 70, probably in 1743, the father died in the Charter House. In the catalogue of the Thomas Calthorpe Blofield Collection (1907) p. 310, no. 40, is a miniature portrait thought to be of Woolaston dating from about 1720. The sitter's eyes are pale gray and his hair brown.

<sup>5</sup> Note the spelling of Woolaston's name in Dunlap and also in the correspondence of Lieut.-Governor Colden in the New-York Historical Society Collections; also in Stokes' *Iconography*.

<sup>6</sup> This is pure guess work based, for my own part, largely upon the stylistic development in Woolaston's first known portrait dated 1736. However, John Woolaston could have been born as early as 1700. Interestingly, Dr. Henry Wilder Foote has, without prompting from me, estimated Woolaston's birth date at about 1710.

<sup>7</sup> William T. Whitley, *Artists and their Friends in England*, London and Boston, 1928, 2 vols.

<sup>8</sup> Prof. Thomas E. Thorne of William and Mary College is making a collection of photographs of early American art. I was glad to supply him a copy of my Woolaston check list. Prof. Thorne, in turn, kindly presented me with photographs for Figures 1, 2, 3 and 7.

<sup>9</sup> The words "right" and "left" are those of the sitter. They are equivalent to the heraldic dexter and sinister.

<sup>10</sup> For example, compare the patterns of the laces in Figures 1, 3, 5 and 8.

<sup>11</sup> George Vertue, *Notes* (5 vols.). References to Van Aken are scattered through the *Notes*, mainly in the secret part which was not to be published until long after Vertue's death. Horace Walpole bought the *Notes*, which served as a basis for the *Anecdotes* mentioned in my note 4. Walpole scrupulously respected Vertue's wishes. The quotation is from Vertue, III, 123.

<sup>12</sup> Whitley, *op. cit.*, I, 109; Admiral Lestock print after Woolaston 1746; Graves and Cronin, *Sir Joshua Reynolds*, II, 418; portrait of Captain John Hamilton dated 1746 in Charles Leslie, *Sir Joshua Reynolds*, I, 31.

- <sup>13</sup> This painting was exhibited under glass at the Corcoran Gallery of Art in 1950 where I studied it frequently. Repro. *American Processional*, p. 49.
- <sup>14</sup> *The Art of Painting* referred to in Whitley, *op. cit.*, I, 104.
- <sup>15</sup> Vertue, *Notes*, III, 141-142 (alphabetized under Aken, Joseph van).
- <sup>16</sup> *New York Evening Post*, Monday, May 15, 1749. For details see I. N. P. Stokes, *Iconography of Manhattan*, IV, 616.
- <sup>17</sup> A Dr. Calhoun was stabbed by Oliver de Lancey. The De Lanceys were such a powerful faction politically that it was virtually impossible to find witnesses against Oliver de Lancey. I have never found proof that De Lancey was tried or that Wollaston appeared against him. See Stokes, *op. cit.*, IV, 616, for details. No Wollaston portrait of a De Lancey has so far come to light.
- <sup>18</sup> William Sawitzky, "The American Work of Benjamin West," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, XLII (Oct. 1938), 440.
- <sup>19</sup> Photographs of these are at the Frick Library in New York.
- <sup>20</sup> Morgan Dix, *A History of the Parish of Trinity Church*, 4 vols., 1898-1906, I, 251. The portrait of Vesey reproduced on p. 98 of vol. I is not by Wollaston. Mr. Theodore Bolton and I concur on that point.
- <sup>21</sup> In preparation of this study I read virtually all the relevant newspapers of the period in the Library of Congress, searching for Wollaston material. It is a pleasure to mention that the poem was discovered through Prof. Carl Bridenbaugh, then Director of the Institute of Early American Culture at Colonial Williamsburg. With his usual courtesy he communicated his discovery to me at once.
- <sup>22</sup> In the Martha Washington papers in the Virginia Historical Society.
- <sup>23</sup> Information through Thomas E. Beggs from the Smithsonian Institution ornithological and weapons staffs.
- <sup>24</sup> E. B. Greene and Virginia D. Harrington, *American Population before the Census of 1790*, New York, 1932, *passim*.
- <sup>25</sup> For Clive, see the *Dictionary of National Biography*.
- <sup>26</sup> India Records Dept., *Press List of Ancient Records Relating to India*, IV, 109 (1758); V, 49, 111-12 (1759); VI, 12 (1760).
- <sup>27</sup> From the "Bouquet Papers," Mss. Division, Library of Congress.
- <sup>28</sup> Flexner, "Benjamin West's American Neo-Classicism," *New-York Historical Society Quarterly*, XXXVI (Jan. 1951), 4-41. I heartily concur with Mr. Flexner in regarding the Williamsburg "West" landscape as not by West. The palette in the landscape seems inconsistent with the preceding and succeeding paintings in Sawitzky's catalogue.
- <sup>29</sup> *American Magazine and Monthly Chronicle of the British Colonies*, I (Oct. 1758), 608, reproduced in Bolton and Binsse, and in part in J. T. Flexner's *First Flowers of Our Wilderness*, p. 190.
- <sup>30</sup> Bolton and Groce, "John Hesselius," *The Art Quarterly*, II (1939), 76-91.
- <sup>31</sup> W. Sawitzky, *Matthew Pratt*, New-York Historical Society, 1942, p. 9 and Pl. 1.
- <sup>32</sup> Groce, "New York Painting before 1800," *New York History*, XIX (1938), 54.
- <sup>33</sup> Helen Burr Smith, "John Mare (1739-c. 1795)," *New-York Historical Society Bulletin*, XXXV (Oct., 1951), 354-399. Miss Smith's workmanship cannot be too highly commended. The dimensions of the copy differ drastically from Wollaston's conventional 30 x 25 bust length portrait.
- <sup>34</sup> James M. Holzman, *The Nabobs in England (1760-1785)*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1926, *passim*.
- <sup>35</sup> Sir George Forrest, *Lord Clive*, 2 vols., London, II, 312 and 305.
- <sup>36</sup> John Chaloner Smith, *British Mezzotint Portraits*, III, 1255.
- <sup>37</sup> Repro. Anna W. Rutledge, *Artists in the Life of Charleston*, Phila., 1949, p. 174.
- <sup>38</sup> Harriott Ravenel, *Eliza [Lucas] Pinckney*, New York, 1896, p. 65. The phrase "shadow" does not at all imply a silhouette. It meant her image, reflection, portrait. See Murray's *New Oxford Dictionary*. The portrait was later burned. It has been said that Wollaston was at this time "reduced" to cutting silhouettes.
- <sup>39</sup> *South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine*, XX (1919), 257.
- <sup>40</sup> [Charleston] *South Carolina Gazette* at the Charleston Library Society was consulted in that city.



Fig. 7. JOHN WOLLASTON, *Richard Randolph, Jr.*  
Williamsburg, Va., *William and Mary College*



Fig. 8. JOHN WOLLASTON, *Ann Gibbs (Mrs. Edward Thomas)*  
Worcester Art Museum



*Fig. 1. GIOVANNI PISANO, Fragment from tomb of Margaret of Luxemburg  
Genoa*



*Fig. 2. Resurrection of the Virgin  
St. Denis, Cathedral*

## SHORTER NOTES:

### PIETRO TOESCA'S "IL TRECENTO"— A CRITICAL STUDY

By W. R. VALENTINER

THE new volume of Toesca's history of Italian art is one of the finest achievements in the field of art history in recent years. Because of war conditions we had to wait twenty-three years for its publication, the second part of the volume devoted to the Middle Ages having appeared in 1927. It was worth while to wait. In no field of Italian art has so much research been made during the last two decades as the Trecento. It is one of the merits of Toesca to have incorporated the results of this vast amount of research and, what is more, to have selected judiciously out of the many divergent opinions the most probably correct ones. With a well balanced judgment the author combines a luminous and readable style in contrast to the involved manner of some of the younger Italian art historians who try to emulate their master Longhi.

In speaking about Toesca's work one of course thinks at once of his great predecessor Adolfo Venturi, who covered the same subject in two volumes (1906 and 1907). But these two volumes contain probably less text than Toesca's one, since their illustrations take more space and the footnotes less (the elaborate footnotes in Toesca's case make fascinating reading for students). This does not mean that Toesca's book is not also fully illustrated, many of the reproductions representing less known works or unusual details of better known ones.

These illustrations show as well as the text the advancement of the times. Venturi's volumes, while outdated in some sections, are still very useful for the material brought together and, as Toesca rightly says, the intuitive way in which it is selected and grouped. Yet Toesca has displayed his material with greater balance, with a much increased knowledge and with a more versatile and more differentiated reasoning, in comparison to which Venturi often seems naïve and over temperamental. Some parts of the four sections of the book (architecture, sculpture, painting and decorative arts), like the first one on architecture, were almost completely neglected by Venturi and had to be written anew.

The author points out rightly the injustice of the opinion of some French writers who believe that Italian Gothic architecture is lacking in originality and its masters late imitators of the French. It is true French Gothic architecture developed earlier, has a greater unity and a more consistent development than the Italian. But as in the other arts, Italian architecture can boast of a number of outstanding individualities, whose ideas are of remarkable originality at a time when in France and other parts of Europe we can differentiate only between schools. In Italy we know architects not only by name but by the outspoken characteristics of their works, masters like Arnolfo di Cambio, Nicola and Giovanni Pisano, Lorenzo Maitani, Francesco Talenti, Giovanni di Agostino, Lando di Pietro. If we read, for instance, Toesca's excellent characterization of the difference in temperament between Arnolfo di Cambio and Giovanni Pisano as architects, we are reminded of a similar contrast of personalities in the sixteenth century between Bramante and Michelangelo. That original ideas sometimes were not in step with the technical ability to express them, as we see it in Lando di Pietro's great fragment of the extended Sienese cathedral, was more likely to happen in Italy than in France.

Unsurpassed among the still preserved European monuments of the fourteenth century is the civil architecture in Italy, described well and with impressive illustrations by Toesca, as an expression of the individualism of the rulers or the early independent development of the city states.

The second section on Gothic sculpture begins, like that on architecture, with an introductory chapter on contemporary French art, ending with an enumeration of foreign sculptures imported to Italy at this time. The first and most important chapter is devoted to the great masters of Tuscany starting with the direct followers of Nicola Pisano, the master himself being included in an earlier volume. Among them Arnolfo di Cambio has in recent times risen to unprecedented height as a sculptor through the study of his works in Rome, Umbria and Florence which were formerly unjustly given to two different personalities, a Roman and a Florentine Arnolfo. Toesca rightly gives to him in Rome not only the Annibaldi tomb, and the signed Ciborium in S. Paolo fuori le mura (whose collaborator he believes to be probably the mosaicist Pietro da Oderisio) but also the Ciborium in S. Cecilia, the *Adoration of the Magi* in S. Maria Maggiore, and the Sacello of Boniface VIII in the Grotte Vaticane, which have been excluded from his works by other scholars. The statue of Charles of Anjou, one of the great portrait statues of the Middle Ages, is somewhat underrated if given to some assistant. Toesca very plausibly does



not hold the often discussed bronze statue of St. Pieter to be by Arnolfo, but his suggestion that it is by another great sculptor of the end of the thirteenth century does not seem yet the final solution of the problem. Toesca rightly praises the classical grandeur of Arnolfo's sculptures for the Florentine cathedral, the head of the young apostle being finely described as "Degna dell'arcaismo greco quasi che Arnolfo riconduca la scultura all' acerbità e alla freschezza di momenti primitivi." The triptych of S. Croce and the London *Annunciation* he gives, however, to an indefinite pupil of Nicola Pisano, while I would have included them in Arnolfo's work (not the St. George relief of the Porta S. Giorgio).

Giovanni Pisano forms the greatest contrast in temperament to Arnolfo ("la sua gamma spirituale ebbe pochi toni ma altissimi"). Beginning with the division of the work between Nicola and Giovanni on the Perugia fountain, he centers his characterization on the façade sculptures in Siena, the pulpits in Pistoia and Pisa and the grandiose figures from the outside of the Pisan Baptistery which have become better known only recently through the Mostra in Pisa in 1946. Among the Pisan works he includes the Spina *Madonna*, giving the formerly signed *Madonna* of Henry VII at least in execution to the workshop (I believe Carli's and Marangoni's suggestion of Tino's collaboration is probably correct). As he does not follow the usual dating of the Prato *Madonna* at the very end of Giovanni's life, the last work is for him the tomb of Margaret of Luxemburg of 1312 (Toesca dates it 1313 but the Empress died December 14, 1311 and on August 25, 1312 Giovanni received part payment in Genoa). He praises rightly the extraordinarily beautiful composition of the lunette (Fig. 1), connecting it with the motifs of resurrections from the Last Judgments on the pulpit. I believe a still more direct relation exists between Giovanni Pisano's lunette and the French relief of the *Resurrection of the Virgin* on the Portal of St. Denis (Fig. 2) where also two angels lift up the main figure from her deathbed in a somewhat similar attitude.<sup>1</sup> An early copy of this French relief (c. 1195) exists in Vezzolano near Asti, not far from Genoa, but it is more likely that Giovanni saw the original while traveling in France. The famous inscription on the Pisa pulpit ("Circuit hic ammes mundi partesque Johannes . . .") speaks of long journeys of the artist according to Toesca's plausible interpretation, in which he differs completely from P. Bacci and H. Keller who believe in a far-fetched reference to an allegory expressed in the central groups of this pulpit.

In a chapter devoted to the immediate followers of Giovanni Pisano, Toesca

mentions first a few outstanding isolated works by unknown masters, among them the remarkable tomb figure of a prophet in S. Simeone Grande in Venice,<sup>2</sup> dated erroneously by Venturi in 1417 instead of 1317, then describes the development of Tino di Camaino and of Giovanni di Balduccio, the first disseminating the master's style to the South, the second to the North. Tino, the greater of the two, has become better known recently, especially in his Florentine period. Toesca is right in attributing to him an unknown angel from the Museo S. Spirito, and the bust of the *Carita* in the Opera del Duomo, given by Venturi to Giovanni Pisano. But the head of *St. John the Baptist*, according to Toesca near to Andrea Pisano, also must now be considered his work, belonging to the *Baptism of Christ* from the Baptistry, following Giulia Brunetti's discovery of the half-length figure of Christ in the court of the Opera del Duomo as an indisputable work by Tino. The so-called master of St. Giovanni who has been once constructed out of these fragments is therefore none other than Tino himself.

Among the other Sienese sculptors to whom a special chapter is devoted are Goro di Gregorio, Gano, Agostino di Giovanni and his son, but Lorenzo Maitani, the master of the façade sculptures at Orvieto, takes the first place. Toesca gives to him, cautiously and convincingly, the whole design of this astounding composition and the execution of the best and most original part of the first and last pilaster sculptures, as well as the bronze angels over the door and the wood crucifixes in the sacristy. There is no doubt that these works are all by one sculptor, one of the greatest masters of the Italian Gothic. Misled by an error of A. Venturi, who believed that the documents spoke of the execution of the crucifixes by Nicola di Nuto (while these documents refer only to his carvings of figures on the choir stalls) I once erroneously gave this whole complex to Nicola di Nuto, who was Maitani's leading collaborator and successor. I mention this here, as this error has again and again been mentioned in literature in spite of the fact that I have been for a long time of the same conclusion as Toesca, Carli and others that Lorenzo Maitani is the artist responsible. It must be said, however, that we have no direct testimony for his having executed the sculptures mentioned and that if he did them, besides the enormous work for the architectural and engineering undertakings in Orvieto and other cities which are mentioned in the documents, his life work must have been as full as that of Michelangelo.

As far as the dates are concerned, L. Fumi, who published the documents, is of the opinion that the façade sculptures were not executed until 1321 when



*Fig. 3. GANO, Statuette of a Prophet  
Casole, Ranieri Tomb*



*Fig. 4. Tomb Figure of a Prophet  
Venice, S. Simeone Grande*



*Fig. 5. Detail of Figure 4*



*Fig. 6. Detail of Figure 4*

a large transportation of marbles was listed, among them some specified for the doorways. However, the contract with Maitani of 1310 makes it clear that he intended at least to start the façade decorations then with his helpers. The bronze figures above the doors are documented for the time from 1325-1330. Considering the time from 1310 or even from 1321 until 1330 (the death of Maitani) it does not seem to me very convincing that the second master (who worked mainly on the second and third pilaster, as Carli also has pointed out) should be one of the followers of Nicola Pisano, as Toesca suggests. He mentions some of Nicola's first pupils as a possibility: Lapo or Donato and Goro with his sons, who worked on the Sienese pulpit and became Sienese citizens in 1272. C. Gnudi and E. Carli have recently classified the style of these collaborators of Nicola; they are much older than the Orvieto masters and have little in common with their work. The trouble with the documents is that they mention not too few, but too many as helpers of Maitani, so that it seems almost impossible to differentiate between the individuals and to identify their names with specific works. Nicola di Nuto was undoubtedly one of the first, although his documented wood carving on the choir stalls is, according to Toesca, rather weak. Francesco Talenti, still young, is mentioned at least once but cannot be identified thus far. Of the other artists, we know no works which would help us to identify them.

Andrea Pisano, whose later relief on S. Martino, Pisa, seems to speak for an acquaintance with the Orvieto reliefs, is not among the listed helpers of Lorenzo Maitani and his origins are still a mystery. The *Annunziata* in wood in the Pisa Museum, dated 1321, recently given to him, is questioned by Toesca as an early work of Andrea; he thinks it possibly by Agostino di Giovanni, a name suggested by an inscription found on the base. (However, the type of the Virgin seems to me nearer to Andrea than to the Sienese master.) It is, of course, impossible to touch here upon all the interesting problems offered in Toesca's book. It is self-evident that there will be slight divergences of opinions between him and those who have made a special study in the different fields covered in his work; but he is right to be inclined to be cautious or even conservative rather than to be too open towards new theories, since his book is intended first of all to give a solid foundation for the study of Trecento art.

One may call conservative also Toesca's conception of Giotto's beginnings, to whom a considerable part of the third section of his work is devoted, which comprises the painting of the Trecento. From former publications we know



that Toesca is in agreement with Berenson in believing in Giotto's work at Assisi and in recognizing his earliest endeavors in some of the frescoes of the Cimabue and Cavallini school. This opinion, which goes back to H. Thode's studies on Giotto, written in the eighties and nineties of the last century, found at the time few believers and has been contradicted by a number of the leading scholars of the present generation, who exclude Giotto entirely from participating in the frescoes at Assisi. While Toesca is here in some respect conservative, he is in another sense more positive and less sceptical than those students who have followed a general trend of the times in their negative attitudes.

Similarly Toesca holds to the earlier opinion that the Rucellai *Madonna* is not a work by Duccio, although it has been found that he executed an icon for the *laudesi* of S. Maria Novella in 1285 which fits about the time of the Rucellai *Madonna*. (According to Toesca it should be dated a few decades later.) This has the advantage of simplifying the development of the artist, among whose early works Toesca considers the exquisite small panels of the *Madonna* in Bern and in Siena.

The chapters on Giotto, Duccio, Simone Martini (whose art is especially well characterized and treated with much sympathy and warmth) and the two great brothers Pietro and Ambrogio Lorenzetti, belong to the most important and most illuminating chapters in Toesca's book. Their unusual length is justified, although some of the followers like Orcagna in Florence and Barna in Siena suffer somewhat from underestimation. (It is difficult to follow Toesca when he is almost inclined to identify Barna, of whom little is known in documents, with Lippo Memmi.)

Toesca differentiates clearly between the originality of the great masters and the imitation of minor followers, allowing little space to anything which seems "mediocre" to him. Thus it happens that some of the painters to whom Offner devoted long dissertations are mentioned only in footnotes. However, in these instances also, Toesca always takes a clear stand if it comes to essential problems, as in the questions of the Biadaiolo miniaturist and the Master of the Dominican portraits, of Maso and the so-called Giottino, of Traini and the Master of the *Triumph of Death* in Pisa. The proportion of the treatment of Giotto and his followers of the fourteenth century is such that he allots about fifty pages to the first and the same to the other Trecento painters in Florence; in regard to Siena about one hundred pages to the masters from Duccio to Barna and about ten to the rest, which is perhaps more justified



than the scanty treatment given to some of the Florentine Trecentists.

The difficult field of North Italian sculpture and painting has always been a special study of Toesca from which resulted his earlier history of Lombard painting. The individualities are less pronounced than in Central Italy and the artists, often connected with the Northern Gothic, underwent the most diverse influences. The relationship between the leading painters and the miniaturists is here closer than in Florence. The excellent chapter on miniature painting in North Italy in the preceding section of Toesca's publication should be read, therefore, in connection with the earlier chapters of painting of this part of Italy. The same may be said of the art of the goldsmith, where we find some of the architects and sculptors like Lando di Pietro or artists related to the sculptures of Nicola Pisano, Tino di Camaino and Andrea Pisano. Among the enamel painters Ugolino di Vieri is strongly influenced by the great Sienese masters of his time. And even in the art of ivory and bone of the Embriacchi, who came originally from Florence, Toesca rightly finds connection with the style of Giotto. The excellent description of other decorative arts, like textiles, ceramics, intarsia, ironwork, coins and seals, completes the picture of this epoch, which is so rich in the production of great works of art in the most diverse fields.

The collections of Italian art are nowadays so widespread over the Old and New World that it is almost impossible for scholars to become acquainted with the contents of all of them. The war made traveling for European scholars very difficult. American students may, therefore, be disappointed that some of the paintings and sculptures on this side of the ocean are not mentioned in Toesca's book, or have even been questioned as originals. To these belong two of the finest Trecento sculptures in the United States: the *Goldman Tabernacle* by Tino di Camaino (now in the National Gallery in Washington) and the *Madonna* statuette by Nino (or Andrea) Pisano in Detroit, which still has inimitable parts of the original coloring and gilding. I have no doubt that if Toesca had seen the originals, he would have been less sceptical.

It is hoped that the book will be translated soon into English, as its subject is one in which the popular interest is increasing constantly in connection with similar tendencies in modern art.

<sup>1</sup> It is illuminating to see how Giovanni Pisano developed out of the two-dimensional French relief a three-dimensional composition with a spiral movement of each figure. As far as the content is concerned, one may hesitate to believe that Giovanni Pisano dared to use a holy subject for a worldly representation like that of a tomb of an Empress. But we know that medieval Emperors liked to compare and even identify themselves with biblical figures, and that neither they nor their followers considered this blasphemous. Frederick II speaks of his mother as Diva Augusta and of his birthplace as his Bethlehem. Dante in telling of his encounter with Henry VII says he felt that he was kneeling before the Lamb of God. Margaret of Luxembourg, in being guided to the throne of God after her resurrection, had become more than a human being.

<sup>2</sup> Toesca uses the same photograph as A. Venturi and Planiscig. I reproduce here some new ones (Figs. 4-6) which were taken for me by Dr. H. Bauer of Munich. They give a better idea of the unusual character of the statue with its almost Michelangelesque head. The name of the master according to the inscription on the tomb is Marcus Romanus. Toesca believes that Marco is of Pisan or possibly Siennese training and remarks rightly that nothing in this figure points to Roman characteristics. He is, to my mind, nearest in style to Gano (+1318) whose statuette of a prophet from the Ranieri tomb at Casole (destroyed during the war) is here shown for comparison. (I have to thank Dr. Carli for the photograph, Fig. 3.) The proportions of the head, the slightly open mouth showing the teeth, and especially the cordlike style of hair and beard ending in drill holes point clearly to the same school, although the sculpture in Venice is more manneristic. The latter, executed in Tuscan marble, is obviously imported, just as the marble statues by Giovanni Pisano at Padua and the Nino Pisano statues in SS. Giovanni e Paolo at Venice. The measurements were obviously given incorrectly to the Siennese artist by the Venetian commissioners, as the tomb figure is much too large for the sarcophagus.

The fact that the wording of the inscription on the tomb is very similar to the one on the Gano tomb may also speak for the origin of both from the same school. It reads:

*Celavit Marcus hoc opus insigne Romanus  
Laudibus non parvus est sua digna manus*

The inscription on the Casole tomb reads:

*Celavit Ganus opus hoc insigne Senensis  
Laudibus immensis est sua digna manus*

The conventional treatment of the hair and beard of San Simeone departs considerably from Giovanni Pisano and follows the *Zeitstil* to be found in cathedral sculptures north of the Alps at the beginning of the fourteenth century (see the *Apostles* at Strasbourg in O. Schmitt, *Strasburger Münster*, I, pls. 110 and 113). It is not impossible that Marco Romano is identical with the Marco who signed a *Madonna* statue at Piombino, together with Ciolo da Siena, obviously a youthful work of the two artists, more or less copied after Giovanni Pisano, but showing in the treatment of the Child's hair the beginning of the fantastic style of the San Simeone. Among the pupils of Giovanni Pisano at Siena is mentioned a Marco (I. B. Supino, *Arte Pisana*, 1904, p. 183).

## WEST'S "THE WASHING OF SHEEP" GENRE OR POETIC PORTRAIT?

SOME LOST AND SOME DOUBTFUL SUBJECTS  
FROM THOMSON'S "SEASONS"

By HELMUT VON ERFFA

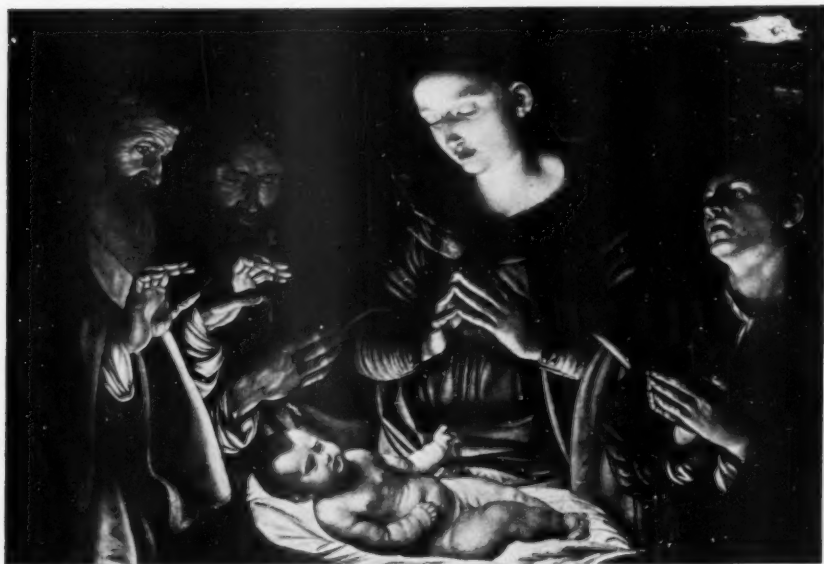
**B**ENJAMIN WEST is well represented in American museums by his portraits, religious subjects and even some of his rare classical subjects. Recently the John Herron Art Institute of Indianapolis acquired a charming landscape *Woodcutters in Windsor Great Park*, but as far as I know his genre subjects are totally unknown here. Through the kindness of Dr. Ralph G. Wright, Rutgers University was given *The Washing of Sheep* (Fig. 1). It had remained in the painter's collection until sold in the Robins Sale in 1829 as lot 144 for seventy guineas.<sup>1</sup> Signed and dated "B. West 1795,"



Fig. 1. BENJAMIN WEST, *The Washing of Sheep*  
New Brunswick, N. J., Rutgers University



Fig. 2. BENJAMIN WEST, *The Washing of Sheep* (drawing)  
London, Victoria and Albert Museum  
(Crown Copyright)



*Fig. 1. GIOVANNI GEROLAMO SAVOLDO, *The Nativity*  
Washington, D. C., National Gallery of Art, S. H. Kress Collection*



*Fig. 2. GERARD VON HONTHORST, *The Nativity*  
Florence, Uffizi*

our picture nevertheless presents a problem because there is a drawing in the Victoria and Albert Museum which is dated 1783 (Fig. 2).<sup>2</sup> There is no doubt about the date. In style the drawing resembles a great many of West's drawings of the eighties, which are also in pen and brown wash with a touch of blue wash; freer in execution, less precise and tight than those of the seventies and stronger in relief. There is also no question about the date of the painting.

The answer lies probably in West's habit of going over his paintings. The Philadelphia exhibition of 1938 had several of them, e.g., *The Shunamite's Son Restored to Life by Elisha*, Philadelphia Museum of Art, was dated 1774 and retouched 1819. Our painting varies slightly from the drawing in the added background, in the treatment of the Dorset(?) ram, which in the painting is forcefully pushed into the water, and in two figures added behind the mother and her children. The painting itself seems to have been slightly altered. The face of the owner was repainted darker and so was the face of the clothed figure in the water. In addition a grayish wash has been drawn around the silhouette of the trees to give them more substance. In spite of this the surface has lost none of its freshness and spontaneity. The contrast between the passive workers who watch the outgoing sheep, or drive them into the water with long sticks, and those who push the ram into the flood or keep the sheep in the water, is so effective that one is reminded of Alberti's *festina lente* rule which goes through so much of Italian Renaissance painting. There is also a good color contrast. Reds and blues of high intensities in the two active men and in the stockings of the owner stand out against the neutral tones of the rest of the picture.

It would be easy to think of *The Sheep Washing* as a genre picture. Genre painting made its appearance in England about 1760. Gainsborough sweetened his leisure hours with rural genre pictures and a few years before our picture in 1791 Morland achieved a great triumph with his *Interior of a Stable*. West did a *Driving Sheep and Cows to Water*,<sup>3</sup> but almost all his other genre subjects seem to be mothers and children.<sup>4</sup> There is one other rural subject, *Harvest Home*. This also is lost. It was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1795 while *The Sheep Washing* was exhibited the following year.

Both scenes are described in Thomson's *Seasons*:

Summer, V (*The Sheep Washing*)

Urged to the giddy brink, much is the toil,  
The clamor much, of men, and boys, and dogs

Ere the soft, fearful people to the flood  
Commit their woolly sides. And oft the swain,  
On some impatient seizing, hurls them in;

.....

And panting labor to the farthest shore . . .  
Heavy and dripping . . .

*Autumn, V (Harvest Home)*

. . . the toil-strung youth,  
By the quick sense of music taught alone,  
Leaps wildly graceful in the lively dance.  
Her every charm abroad, the village toast,  
Young, buxom, warm, in native beauty rich,  
Darts not unmeaning looks;

West chose several themes from the *Seasons* for subjects, but they are all lost but one (see appendix). Windsor, after all, was part of Thomson's country. We know that the poet liked to walk in the region around Richmond and Windsor where West painted; as a matter of fact, he died from the effect of a cold contracted at Hammersmith, where West also painted.<sup>5</sup>

It is also not entirely impossible that this is a conversation piece.<sup>6</sup> West uses a sort of neo-classic mask for the shepherds in our picture but for the owner, who has brought his whole family for the spectacle, it seems to be a portrait. Letters or documents may be hidden in English attics which could reveal the name of the owner.

## APPENDIX

### West's subjects from Thomson's *Seasons*

John Galt, *The Life, Studies, and Works of Benjamin West*, London, 1820, II, 227: the small picture from Thomson's *Seasons* of *Miranda and Her Two Companions* (present whereabouts unknown). According to the catalogue in *La Belle Assemblée*, July 1808, Supplement to IV, 17, it hung in the painting room of West's house. It can be dated between 1803 and 1808, since it does not appear in the catalogue of Barlow's *Columbiad* which goes up to 1803; and is included in the catalogue of *La Belle Assemblée* published in 1808. A drawing for it is in the British Museum. Also lost is *Musidora*, mentioned only in Robins Sales catalogue, p. 27, lot 84. None of the other catalogues list it. Was prudery the reason?

Another subject, *Salmacis and Hermaphroditus* (from Ovid), exhibited at the British Institution in 1806, is also suppressed in all catalogues. Or did the auctioneer confuse *Musidora* with *Arethusa*, Galt, p. 232? The charming story of *Palemon and Lavinia* is represented in the British Museum by a water color attributed to West because it is signed with the familiar B.W. at the right hand corner. I wonder if that is really West's hand? The letters are so sharp and precise that I am reminded of West's son Benjamin's hand. To judge by a black and white photograph and a color slide supplied by the museum through the kindness of Mrs. Homer Thompson, there is nothing of the painter's fluency and nervous stroke. The opaqueness of the surface and the verticality of the trees of the middle ground are also unlike West. By the way, no such subject is mentioned in any of the catalogues of his works or in the exhibition catalogues. *Lovers Killed by Lightning* is probably not a Thomson subject because he lets only the girl get killed. "A



blackened corse was struck the beauteous maid." The source is probably Pope's letter to Martha Blount, August 6, 1718. Such a title is mentioned in the catalogue of 1823, West's Gallery, Newman Street, No. 8. It is also listed in the 1851 handwritten catalogue of lost drawings as No. 87 in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia: *The Two Lovers Struck Dead by Lightning*.

<sup>1</sup> Joel Barlow's lengthy epic *The Columbiad*, 2 vols., Philadelphia, 1809, and *La Belle Assemblée*, Supplement to vol. IV, 1808, are our sources for West's paintings in his own house. Barlow's list, though, only sums up the pictures under "West collection" while the other catalogue mentions the actual rooms and West's house at Windsor and its pictures. Galt's list, more complete than the other two, omits all subheadings.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. C. H. Gibbs-Smith, Keeper of Extension Services at the Victoria and Albert Museum, has kindly furnished the following description for which I extend my warmest thanks: "Pale brown tinted paper in pen and dark brown ink (probably not sepia). Pale blue water color wash; some brown ink wash and what appears to be a little diluted ink wash mixed with the blue."

<sup>3</sup> Galt, *op. cit.*, p. 229. West's own collection. A drawing for it is in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

<sup>4</sup> *Boys Eating Grapes*, West collection, catalogue of 1823, inner room, No. 123. (Not in Galt.) *Child Afraid of Crossing Water*, Robins Sales catalogue, p. 11, lot 28, 1829. *Children Eating Cherries*, Galt, *op. cit.*, p. 230. *Mothers with Their Children in Water*, Galt, p. 230.

<sup>5</sup> *A View of the River Thames at Hammersmith*. Another lost picture. Galt, p. 225. Robins Sale lot 176, p. 52.

<sup>6</sup> Other such conversation pieces are: *Gentlemen Fishing at Degenham Breach*, Galt, p. 229. Exhib. Royal Academy, 1795. West and Sir Hugh Palliser, Admiral and governor of Greenwich Hospital, are identified according to Robins Sale lot 175, p. 51. The picture is lost. Another picture once owned by McClees Galleries is *A Visit to Tintern Abbey*, 1798, with the Duke of Norfolk and friends in the picture.

## SAVOLDO'S PAINTINGS IN THE S. H. KRESS COLLECTION

By WILLIAM E. SUIDA

THE S. H. Kress Collection has had the good fortune to acquire two paintings by the extremely rare Brescian master Giovanni Gerolamo Savoldo, one of which was hitherto completely unknown, the other a famous painting from one of the most illustrious private collections of Europe.

The *Adoration of the Christ Child (The Nativity)* (Fig. 1), painted on a panel of pear wood 33 x 47" (83 x 119.4 cm.) is a striking example of Savoldo's intensive study of artificial light effects. The attitude of the Virgin, her hands folded in prayer, is very similar to that of the Virgin in Savoldo's signed painting in Hampton Court Palace, dated 1527, which is the only dated painting by this master. Another version of this composition is in the Turin Gallery. Thus we are given an approximate indication of the date of the Kress *Nativity*. Since the latter is somewhat more advanced in pictorial treatment and since the new element of artificial lighting is introduced, it is certainly later than the Hampton Court painting. In the Kress *Nativity* we find two different sources of light. The main group, the Madonna, Joseph and two men whom we may call shepherds, are seen in light emanating from the

Christ Child in the center. There is also in the upper right hand corner a supernatural apparition which the artist shows in magic light in the night. It is an angel breaking through the heavy clouds to bring the message to the shepherds on a faraway hill (Fig. 3).

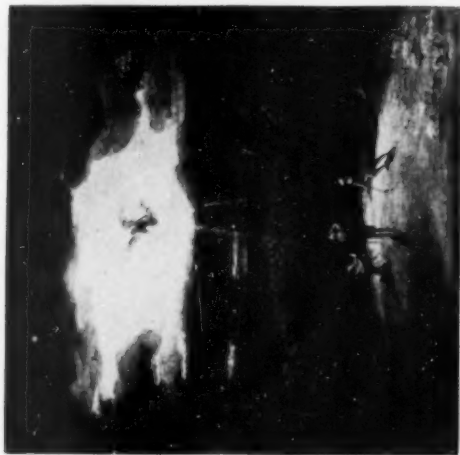
Two other Savoldo paintings of the *Nativity* in half-figures are known: one in the Crespi Morbio collection in Milan, another in the Albertini collection in Rome, both of which are obviously later than our painting. In both there are two sources of light. First, the Child, and second, a kind of anecdotal or genre scene with an open fire in the background of a courtyard with some figures grouped around.

There is some indication as to when Savoldo may have painted pictures of this kind. Vasari saw in the Zecca in Milan "Quadri di notte e di fuochi" (night scenes with firelight), and Creighton Gilbert's suggestion in the *Art Bulletin*, 1945, that they were presumably painted at the time of Savoldo's activity for the Duke Francesco II Sforza is convincing. These observations may limit the date of the Kress *Nativity* to the years between 1527, date of the Hampton Court painting, and 1535, date of the death of Duke Francesco.

The Kress *Nativity* may be the very "Natività di Cristo finta di notte" which Vasari saw in the house of Tommaso da Empoli in Venice. This identification is the more likely because it is a "Natività finta di notte" (Nativity painted as a night scene) but is not "di notte e di fuochi" (night scene with firelight), two types of setting between which Vasari makes a clear distinction.

In his later years Savoldo painted three altarpieces with full-length figures representing the *Nativity*; in the Galleria Martinengo in Brescia, in the Church of S. Giobbe in Venice, and in Terlizzi Apulia. The S. Giobbe altarpiece is traditionally dated 1540. The effect of firelight is abandoned but Savoldo goes back to the celestial apparition to the shepherds in the fields as a source of light. Since the whole scene in the foreground is seen in full daylight, however, the lighting of the Annunciation to the Shepherds is no longer as striking as in the Kress *Nativity*.

The problem of the chronology of Savoldo's work has been discussed recently by Umberto Capelli in *Emporium*, July, 1951. He limits his interest to the early development of Savoldo's style. For further clarification of this rather complicated problem I want to draw attention to two paintings which have not yet been published. In the collection of the architect Gino Bonomi in Milan there is a representation of the *Rest of the Holy Family on the Flight into Egypt* (canvas 85 x 82½ cm.) (Fig. 5). The figures of the Madonna and



*Fig. 3. Detail of Figure 1*



*Fig. 4. GIOVANNI GEROLAMO SAVOLDO  
Procuratore di San Marco  
Milan, Comm. Mauro Pelliccioli  
Collection*



*Fig. 5. GIOVANNI GEROLAMO SAVOLDO  
Rest on the Flight into Egypt  
Milan, Gino Bonomi Collection*



Fig. 6. GIOVANNI GEROLAMO SAVOLDO, *Portrait of a Young Warrior*  
Washington, D. C., National Gallery of Art, S. H. Kress Collection



Fig. 7. GIOVANNI GEROLAMO SAVOLDO, *Portrait Head (drawing)*  
Florence, Uffizi

Child are very similar to those of a painting in Casa Albani, Pesaro, but the color is very different. That of the Bonomi picture has a cast of silvery-gray, definitely not Venetian, but in the line of Lombard tradition and especially of Vincenzo Foppa. For the investigation of Savoldo's Brescian style, the Bonomi painting is of crucial importance.

I know of another painting by the master, also not previously published, the color of which shows the same gray cast as the Bonomi *Rest on the Flight into Egypt*. It is a portrait of a *Procuratore di San Marco* (Fig. 4), property of Comm. Mauro Pelliccioli in Milan. Titian's influence is evident in the general arrangement and the composition. In the color we observe the same grayish tone which is purely Lombard and not Venetian. Therefore, we are led to conclude that Savoldo followed the Venetian example, and especially Titian's, first in his composition alone and only later was influenced by Venetian color.

The architectural background in the Bonomi painting, as well as in the similar painting in Pesaro with the ruins of antique buildings, follows the typically Brescian tendency. We find it again in several works by Moretto and later on in Giovanni Battista Moroni.

In the discussion of Savoldo's portraits I want to warn art historians never to judge any of them without a careful examination of the original. The character of the color is so decisive that even the best reproductions can only be misleading. The magnificent *Portrait of a Young Warrior*, formerly in Prince Liechtenstein's collection, now in the Kress Collection in Washington, is fortunately far above any question (Fig. 6). It is recognized as one of Savoldo's great masterpieces in portraiture. Years ago, in *The Art Quarterly*, 1946, I observed that one of the rare drawings by Savoldo in the Uffizi, Florence (Fig. 7),\* is a first sketch for the head of the Kress portrait. The small scene in the background representing St. George fighting the dragon is undoubtedly an allusion to the young warrior's first name of George.

Savoldo is one of the great prophets in the first half of the sixteenth century. R. Longhi was the first to emphasize Savoldo's importance as one of the predecessors of Michelangelo da Caravaggio. The Kress *Nativity* gives one the opportunity to demonstrate Savoldo's decisive influence on the Northern Caravaggesque painter who was active in Italy between 1610 and 1620: the Dutch painter Gerard von Honthorst. We add the reproduction of a well-known painting by this master painted in his Florentine period and still preserved in the Uffizi, Florence (Fig. 2). The elements of the composition and the striking light effect are almost identical. Not only Honthorst but also

his fellow countryman, also active in Italy, Mattheus Stomer, was inspired by Savoldo's prophetic art. You may recall Mattheus Stomer's *Nativity* in the Palazzo Comunale in Monreale, Sicilia.

\*Conte Carlo Gamba, *Disegni degli Uffizi*, III, 1, No. 17; D. Frh. von Hadeln, *Venezianische Zeichnungen der Hochrenaissance*, Berlin, 1923, p. 38, pl. 19; H. and E. Tietze, *The Drawings of the Venetian Painters*, 1944, p. 248, no. 1407; W. E. Suida, *The Art Quarterly*, IX (1946), 287.

## THE JOHN TRUMBULLS AND MME. VIGÉE-LE BRUN

By THEODORE SIZER

ON the walls of the Detroit Institute of Arts there hangs an American portrait, somewhat in the manner of the French painter Mme. Vigée-Le Brun, of *John Trumbull* (Fig. 2), by John Trumbull. The tale of these three — of the two contemporary Connecticut cousins and of the influence the lovely French lady exerted on one, is worth the telling.

The subject of the portrait is John Trumbull, 1750-1831, Yale, 1767, son of the Reverend John Trumbull, Yale, 1735, a Congregational minister and Fellow of the College. The painter was John Trumbull, 1756-1843, Harvard, 1773, son of Governor Jonathan Trumbull, Harvard, 1727, of Lebanon, Connecticut, first cousin of the Reverend John Trumbull of Westbury, Connecticut. The second cousins are constantly confused.

Both the John Trumbulls were brilliant and precocious boys. John, subsequently poet and jurist, was ready to enter Yale at the age of seven and a half, but was honorably rusticated until he was thirteen before being admitted. Ultimately this John became a tutor at Yale, the author of the celebrated comic epic poem *M'Fingal*, reprinted more than thirty times between 1782 and 1840, literary leader of the "Hartford Wits," and judge of the Supreme Court of Errors of Connecticut. He spent the last six years of his life at Detroit. Like his cousin John, he was a strong Federalist.

John, the future "patriot-artist," who wanted to study painting at Boston under Copley, was sent instead to Cambridge by his practical-minded father with the hope that he might become a lawyer. The fifteen and a half year old boy entered Harvard in the middle of his junior year, graduating a year and





*Fig. 1. ÉLISABETH VIGÉE-LE BRUN, *Emmanuel de Crussol*  
New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art*



*Fig. 2. JOHN TRUMBULL, *John Trumbull, Post*  
Detroit Institute of Arts*



*Fig. 3. ÉLISABETH VIGÉE-LE BRUN, Portrait of her Daughter  
Boston, Museum of Fine Arts*



*Fig. 4. JOHN TRUMBULL, Sophia Chew  
New Haven, Yale University Art Gallery*



*Fig. 5. JOHN TRUMBULL, Harriet Chew  
New Haven, Yale University Art Gallery*

a half later the youngest member of his class. He has the distinction of being the first college graduate in British America to become a professional painter.

Besides receiving a sound classical education, John, the future painter, derived three lasting extra-curricular benefits from his Harvard experience. He obtained some acquaintance with the fine arts, as there were books on the subject in the College Library. (The charge list of books he withdrew still exists.) Hogarth's *Analysis of Beauty* became a sort of bible and his imagination was set aflame by newly arrived bound volumes of Piranesi's prints. The portraits by the great Copley hanging in the College halls were to be studied and copied. Besides this slight introduction to the arts he acquired some fluency in French from a family of "D.P.'s," at that time displaced Acadians. Finally, he made friends who were destined to become influential — and most helpful — in the new Republic. Friends, French and the fine arts were, eventually, of far greater consequence than all his classical learning.

As the young Trumbull, after participating in the Revolutionary War with the rank of colonel, became the pupil of Benjamin West at London, it is all too easy to consider that his style in painting was exclusively derived from his master and modeled on that of the current British school. The colonel was, however, during his long stay in England and on trips to the Continent, deeply moved by European painting, especially by Rubens, whose work he admired above all others. The classical battle pieces by Charles Le Brun excited emulation. His contemporary, David, whose cold classical compositions he held in high esteem, became a firm and very useful friend. It was, however, Mme. Vigée-Le Brun to whom he felt most sympathetic. Trumbull first met that good-looking and talented lady in 1786 at Paris, whither he had gone on Jefferson's invitation. He had an eye for beautiful women — one can hardly blame an artist for that. With David, Mme. Vigée and others language offered no barrier to the French-speaking colonel. He participated in the delightful soirées at Mme. Vigée's salon at 67 rue de Cléry. The influence the contemporary French artists exerted upon the impressionable Yankee was direct, powerful and personal. West is present in his work but so are the French, especially Mme. Vigée-Le Brun.

There exists an extraordinary parallelism between the lives, fortunes and work of this charming Frenchwoman and the sensitive New Englander. They must have been born under the same star. Let us examine this curious coincidence of celestial similarity.

Their lives were exactly contemporary. They were born less than a year

apart. Both passed long years in exile; Trumbull's was voluntary, Vigée's an escape to Italy and Russia during the Revolution. The aesthetic antecedents of the pair of expatriates were much akin. We may presume that both were nurtured on such common sources as Roger de Piles and du Fresnoy. Both had the same reverence for Rubens.

Mme. Vigée-Le Brun's dependence upon the lusty Fleming is manifest if we compare, for instance, her early success *Peace and Plenty*, of 1783, with the latter's *Venus and Adonis*, or her self-portrait in the straw hat, now in the Louvre, with his *Helena Fourment* in Leningrad. It is the same with Trumbull; "for color, composition and expression," he wrote in 1786, "nothing can excell Rubens." There is a relationship, though separated by more than a century and a half, not only between some of the portraits but between the vigorous northerner's battle compositions and Trumbull's baroque-like *Bunker's Hill*. "Le Brun is one of the most charming women I ever saw," Trumbull wrote in 1788. "Her pictures have great merit, particularly the portrait of herself and her daughter, which is not yet finished; in composition of this picture there is simplicity and sweetness worthy of the artist, and a brilliance of coloring quite charming." Both drew inspiration from the same Rubenesque source.

Again both the Connecticut Yankee and the Frenchwoman knew and painted the "V.I.P.'s" of their respective countries. They were both documentary recorders at critical periods in history; they were both intimately related to their times. To carry the similarity of their lives still further, both wrote long and interesting autobiographies in their old age; Vigée's *Memoirs* appearing in three volumes from 1835 to 1837 and Trumbull's, begun in 1835, in 1841.

As to their diversities, Mme. Vigée-Le Brun was a liberal-minded Catholic, Trumbull a Connecticut Congregationalist. The lady, Parisian born and bred, was of a joyous nature; the military man, austere and combative, was a small-town New Englander. Vigée was the daughter of an obscure artist, Trumbull the son of a celebrated statesman. The girl went to a convent school, the boy to Harvard. The woman was happiest when painting her own sex, the colonel was a man's man. Vigée painted some six hundred and sixty portraits, fifteen compositions and about two hundred landscapes; the "patriot-artist" about half that number. Vigée was exclusively an artist, Trumbull, unhappily for his art, indulged in a variety of other activities — soldiering, commerce, diplomacy, architecture, land speculation and so on. Vigée depicted an old social order on the way out, Trumbull recorded the birth of a new one. Both,



*Fig. 6. JOHN TRUMBULL, John Alcop King  
New-York Historical Society*



*Fig. 7. ÉLISABETH VIGÉE-LE BRUN, Portrait of her Brother  
New York Art Market*



Fig. 8. JOHN TRUMBULL, Sketch of Mme. Vigée-Le Brun's  
Self-Portrait with her Daughter, in the Louvre  
New Haven, Yale University Art Gallery



Fig. 9. JOHN TRUMBULL, Sketch of Mme. Vigée-Le Brun's  
Portrait of Marie Antoinette and her Children  
New Haven, Yale University Art Gallery



however, had a great and tragic bond in common. Their respective marriages were singularly unfortunate.

The wife of the proud and pompous Trumbull was an obscure English woman whom he married at London. A visiting nephew, John M. Trumbull, wrote to his family in 1800: "Mrs. Trumbull had neither Father, Mother, Sister, Uncle, Aunt, and may almost say Friend but her husband. I have not yet found her name before married; will inform you when I do." She was Sarah Hope Harvey, possessed of little besides a pretty face and fine figure. She continuously embarrassed her punctilious husband by the effects of her too frequent use of punch. Vigée, on her part, married, secretly, the picture-dealer Jean-Baptiste Pierre Le Brun (1748-1813), grandnephew of the painter Charles Le Brun. This is her candid estimate of her husband: "Not that M. Le Brun was a bad man; his character showed a mixture of gentleness and vivacity; he was obliging towards everybody — in a word, likeable enough; but his unbridled passion for women of bad morals, joined with his fondness for gambling, brought about the ruins of his fortune as well as mine, which was entirely in his keeping. Indeed, when I left Paris in 1789, I had not much as twenty francs of income, though I had earned more than a million. He had squandered the lot." She kept her artistic identity, however, by hyphenating her maiden and married names.

Curiously enough there also exists a bond between Trumbull and Mme. Vigée-Le Brun's disreputable, art-dealing husband. The two men entered into a speculation; the latter purchased Old Masters during the evil days of the Terror which were to be sold in the peaceful and profitable market of London. The venture, however, did not work out too well. The crates containing the pictures, Trumbull recorded, were landed on the banks of the Thames on the eve of the Prince of Wales' birthday; there was an exceptional high tide the next day, and while the lightermen were making merry the cases floated off. As the underwriters would not be held, the poor painter was forced to pass "the remainder of the season repairing — the damage . . . in the extensive rooms of (his) friend, Mr. West." The lot was sold at Christie's on February 16, 1797. The *Times* for the 20th stated that "the sale of Mr. Trumbull's collection of pictures . . . sold extremely well. The highest price pictures were bought by Mr. West supposed to be for the King." The event was even reported in the *Connecticut Journal* of New Haven, though not until April 26, thus: "the sale of Mr. Trumbull's pictures . . . has greatly excited the attention of connoisseurs and with good reason. They have chiefly been collected during

the unhappy troubles and distresses in France. . . . Mr. Trumbull's collection of 91 pictures produced the comfortable sum of £8217-17-0." The partnership was of limited duration and nearly disastrous. Vigée's influence on the Yankee's style was lasting and beneficial.

The constantly confused John Trumbulls were kin; the two artists were kith. To conclude the curious case of parallelism between the gay Parisian painter and the dour colonel both died at the identical age of eighty-seven. Truly those two were born under the same star.

NOTE: Theodore Sizer's *The Works of Colonel John Trumbull, Artist of the American Revolution* was published by the Yale University Press in 1950. His article, "Trumbull's 'Yorktown' and the Evolution of the American Flag," appeared in *The Art Quarterly*, XI (1948), 357-359. Professor Sizer is now engaged in editing Trumbull's *Autobiography*.

## DANS CE NUMÉRO:

### LE MIROIR EN ART

par Heinrich Schwarz

A la fin du moyen âge, le miroir, *speculum sine macula*, symbole de pureté, était l'un des attributs de la Vierge, et l'un des symboles de l'incarnation du Christ. Il symbolise donc à la fois Jésus ("pur miroir sans tache," comme le décrit le mystique allemand Eckhard) et la Vierge: "Marie est le miroir, Jésus l'image," déclare un contemporain. Le *Mariale* de Jacques de Voragine (après 1255) donne une longue interprétation du miroir, symbole de la Vierge.

Dans l'art du moyen âge, l'exemple le plus célèbre du miroir comme allégorie est trouvé dans le double portrait d'Arnolfini et de sa femme Jeanne de Chennany. Les représentations pictoriales du miroir comme symbole de la pureté de Marie sont assez rares avant le 17<sup>e</sup> siècle. L'auteur mentionne cependant, entre autres, le *Buisson Ardent* de Nicolas Froment, une des tapisseries de Reims (avant 1530) où apparaît, l'un des quatorze emblèmes des vertus de la Vierge, le miroir sans tache.

Le miroir n'est pas seulement le symbole de la pureté. Il est aussi l'attribut de la Vérité (comme dans une carte à jouer de Peter Flettner, qui montre deux hommes faisant face à un miroir tenu par une femme qui personnifie *Veritas*) et de la Prudence (par exemple dans un Tarot, vers 1465, où une jeune femme, représentant la connaissance de soi-même, se regarde dans un miroir).

*Sapientia*, la Sagesse, est aussi représentée avec le miroir comme attribut, de même que la Fortune, dont le miroir symbolise l'évanescence et l'instabilité. Ainsi, comme il arrive si souvent dans le

symbolisme du moyen âge et de la Renaissance, le miroir joue des rôles opposés. Il représente à la fois le bien et le mal, le sacré et le profane; il n'est pas seulement le symbole de la Vierge, mais aussi celui de deux des péchés mortels, l'Orgueil et la Luxure (comme à Bordeaux, Moissac, et Arles au moyen âge; chez Brueghel et Bosch au 16<sup>e</sup> siècle). Il est plus encore, et sa force magique est apparente quand il devient l'attribut des sirènes (dessin de Peter Vischer, 1514).

Dans la dernière partie de son article, qui reproduit une conférence donnée à Chicago en janvier 1950, M. Schwarz discute un autre rôle joué par le miroir dans l'histoire de l'art. Les peintres anglais, dit-il, se sont souvent servi du "Claude glass" pour résoudre certains problèmes de perspective, et il est possible que des peintres, tels que Velazquez dans les *Ménines*, se soient servi d'un miroir, que Du Fresnoy appelait "le meilleur maître du peintre."

### JACOPO DELLA QUERCIA ET LA PORTA DELLA MANDORLA

par Giulia Brunetti

Dans cet article, Mlle Brunetti attribue à Jacopo della Quercia les deux figures de l'Annonciation de la Porta della Mandorla à Florence maintenant à l'Opera del Duomo, de même que les deux bustes d'anges, et l'Hercule et l'Apollon qui décorent encore la porte. Ces sculptures, qui ont une grandeur épique, déclare l'auteur, sont l'œuvre d'un des artistes les plus personnels du Quattrocento. Dans ce groupe d'œuvres, dit Mlle Brunetti, on trouve déjà les caractéristiques d'œuvres plus mûres de Jacopo. De plus, interprétant certains passages de Vasari,

l'auteur conclut qu'il existait à Florence, dès 1397, des œuvres relativement importantes du sculpteur; ces œuvres seraient celles de la Porta della Mandorla.

#### JOHN WOLLASTON: UN PEINTRE COSMOPOLITE EN AMÉRIQUE

par George C. Groce

Peu connu en Europe, John Wollaston est un des peintres les plus prolifiques de son temps; il existe près de trois cents portraits de sa main. Né en Angleterre il passa quelque dix ans en Amérique, à New York, où il exécuta près de soixante-quinze portraits, à Annapolis, Philadelphia et Charleston. Son premier portrait connu est daté 1736. Le peintre est mentionné pour la première fois à New York en 1749. Ensuite Wollaston, après un court voyage en Angleterre, s'établit dans le Maryland, puis en Virginie. Il quitta les colonies d'Amérique, probablement en 1758. On le retrouve ensuite aux Indes, un protégé de Clive. Son influence sur la peinture dans les colonies américaines fut très grande: Benjamin West l'admirait, de même que John Hesselius et Matthew Pratt.

#### DEUX TABLEAUX DE SAVOLDO À WASHINGTON

par William E. Suida

M. Suida étudie ici deux œuvres de Savoldo, "l'un des grands prophètes de la première moitié du 16<sup>e</sup> siècle," faisant partie de la collection Kress à la National Gallery de Washington. La *Nativité*, jusqu'à présent inconnue, est peut-être le tableau mentionné par Vasari comme se trouvant chez Tommaso da Empoli à Venise. L'autre tableau est un *Portrait*

d'un jeune Guerrier, qui provient de la collection Liechtenstein. Dans son essai l'auteur étudie d'autres œuvres inconnues du peintre, un *Repos au cours de la Fuite en Egypte* (collection particulière, Milan) et un *Procurateur de Saint-Marc*, aussi à Milan.

#### "LE TRECENTO" DE PIETRO TOESCA: ESSAI CRITIQUE

par W. R. Valentiner

Dans cet essai, M. Valentiner analyse longuement le deuxième volume de l'Histoire de l'Art de Pietro Toesca, consacré au Trecento, qu'il considère "l'une des œuvres les plus remarquables des dernières années." M. Valentiner termine son étude en souhaitant que cet ouvrage soit bientôt traduit en anglais.

#### UNE SCÈNE DE GENRE DE BENJAMIN WEST

par Helmut von Erffa

Dans cet essai l'auteur étudie un des tableaux de genre de Benjamin West, qui sont presque inconnus aux Etats-Unis. Le sujet, tiré des *Saisons* de Thomson, dépeint une scène pastorale, le lavage du troupeau, probablement exécutée vers 1780-1790.

#### LES DEUX JOHN TRUMBULL ET MME. VIGÉE-LE BRUN

par Theodore Sizer

L'essai de M. Sizer est consacré à une comparaison de style entre le peintre John Trumbull et Mme. Vigée-Le Brun, qui sont contemporains. Mention est faite aussi d'un autre John Trumbull, cousin du peintre, qui fut un des bons poètes américains de la fin du 18<sup>e</sup> siècle.

RECENT IMPORTANT  
ACQUISITIONS  
OF AMERICAN COLLECTIONS



JOHN HOPPNER, *The Bowden Children* (30 x 40 in.)  
*Detroit Institute of Arts*



## THE BOWDEN CHILDREN BY JOHN HOPPNER

From an article by E. P. Richardson in the *Bulletin* (Vol. XXXII, No. 1, 1952) of The Detroit Institute of Arts.

We have acquired this winter, as the gift of Mr. and Mrs. William A. Fisher, a most attractive portrait by John Hoppner (1758-1810) of two English children, Master John William Bowden, aged five, and his sister Mary Anne Bowden, aged three. The group is one of Hoppner's most happy studies of children. The contrast between the sturdy independence of the boy and the shyness of his little sister is very well observed and shows the freshness and spontaneity of Hoppner's portrayal of children. One has only to compare this picture with the famous picture of Hoppner's own children, now in the National Gallery, Washington, as the gift of Mr. Joseph Widener, to realize that Mr. and Mrs. Fisher have given us one of the outstanding examples of English portraiture in America.

The little boy in this picture grew up to be a figure of some importance in English intellectual and religious life. I owe to the kindness of Mr. Edward Fowles of Duveen Brothers the information that this is the John William Bowden who became the intimate friend of John Henry Newman and a writer of some weight in the Tractarian movement. Born in London, February 21, 1798, he was the eldest son of John Bowden, of Fulham, Middlesex, and Grosvenor Place, London. He entered Trinity College, Oxford, in 1817 on the same day as Newman, who described their friendship in a letter to the Rev. John Keble (September 14, 1844):

"He [Bowden] is my oldest friend. I have been most intimate with him for twenty-seven years. He was sent to call on me the day after I came into residence — he

introduced me to College and University — he is the link between me and Oxford. . . . We used to live in each other's rooms as undergraduates and men used to mistake our names and call us by each other's. When he married, he used to make a similar mistake himself, and call me Elizabeth and her Newman."

After leaving Oxford Bowden became Commissioner of Stamps and on June 6, 1823, married the youngest daughter of Sir John Edward Swinburne (whose portrait by Gainsborough is also in our collection). But his friendship with Newman continued and after 1833 he took a strong part in the Oxford Revival movement in the English church, contributing to the book-of-hymns, *Lyra Apostolica*, *Tracts for the Times* and writing several important essays for the *British Critic*. The Dictionary of National Biography says of him "How completely at one Newman and Bowden were throughout the whole of the Oxford movement is shown on almost every page of Newman's *Apologia*." In the spring of 1839 Bowden's health began to fail but in 1840 he brought out his chief work, *The Life of Gregory the Seventh*. He died at his father's house in Grosvenor Place, Sept. 15, 1844, and Newman, who stayed with the family, described his death in a letter to Keble and added:

17, Grosvenor Place  
Sept. 17, 1844

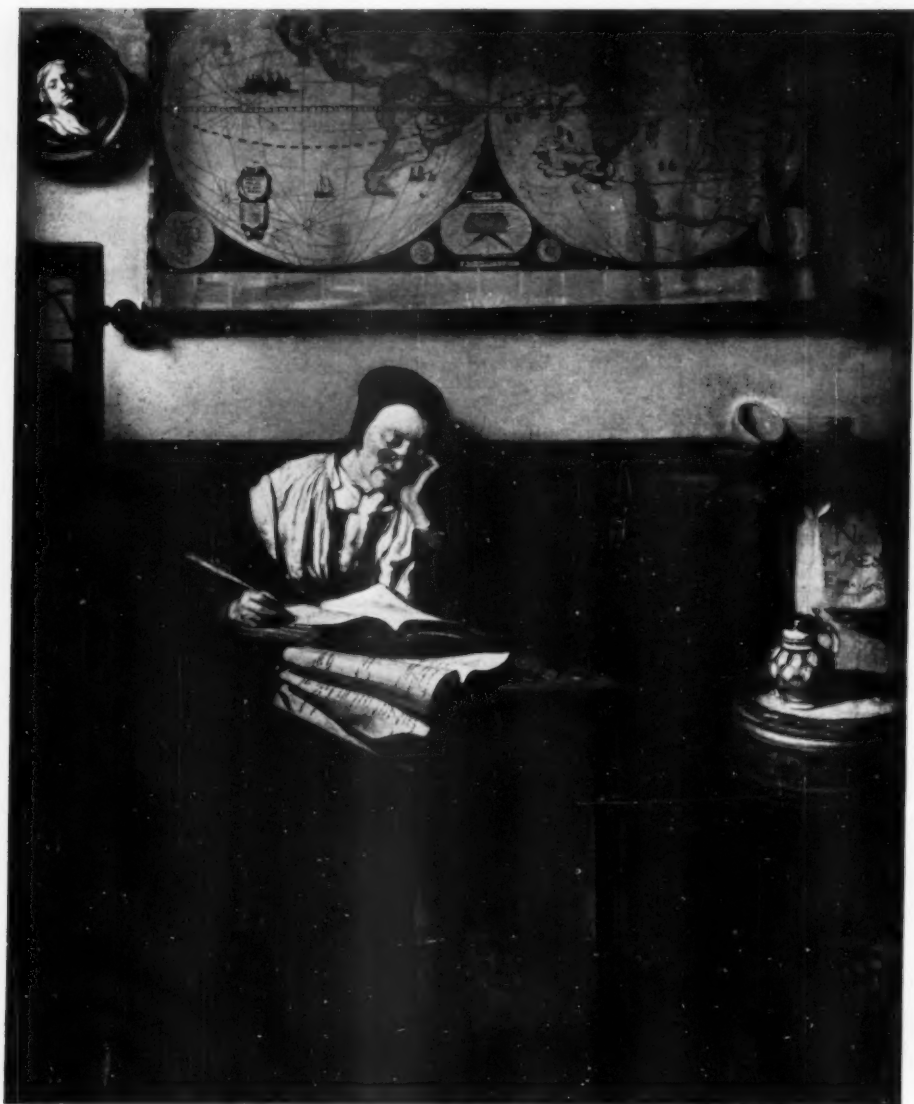
" . . . They have a picture I had not seen for a number of years, by Hoppner, of J. W. B. a boy of four years and his younger sister. He asked how he should like to be painted — and he said 'drawing a church' — so Fulham Church is in the background, and he with a pencil and paper."

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NICOLAES MAES, *The Housekeeper* ( $26\frac{1}{8} \times 21\frac{1}{8}$  in.)  
City Art Museum of St. Louis

The little girl, Mary Anne Bowden, died on May 31, 1819, at Fulham, at the age of nineteen.

Hoppner had a country home at Fulham so that he was a neighbor of the children's father. The picture was probably painted there and remained at Fulham, for it was never shown at the Royal Academy. It remained in possession of the Bowden family until early in the present century. It was sold then to Lord Michelham at whose sale at London, November 23, 1926, it brought the very large price of 11,000 guineas. It passed thence to the collection of Mr. and Mrs. William A. Fisher, Detroit, and now by their generous gift becomes the property of our museum, where its unaffected simplicity and charm of feeling will, we feel certain, give great pleasure to many people.

#### "THE HOUSEKEEPER" BY NICOLAES MAES

From an article by Perry Rathbone in the *Bulletin* (Vol. XXXVI, No. 3, 1951) of the City Art Museum of St. Louis.

The small St. Louis representation of Dutch genre pictures has been enhanced by the recent acquisition of a painting called *The Housekeeper* by Nicolaes Maes. It represents the culmination of the development of Dutch realism which was achieved in the middle decades of the seventeenth century. Realism in painting was the artistic counterpart of the scientific attitude of that age — an age which was profoundly concerned with the discovery of the natural world. This new absorption led to the great discoveries of Isaac Newton and Galileo, and it likewise inspired the first systematic research into botany and natural history which formed the basis of modern knowledge in these sciences. The factual observation

of nature was also the basis of the extraordinary flowering of Dutch painting in the seventeenth century. This realistic concept of art remains today the one most widely understood and accepted, in spite of the artistic revolutions of our time. In the seventeenth century, however, realism was something new, the earlier manneristic style having been discarded, and the perfection of the new style by the Dutch was the great achievement of the generation of Nicolaes Maes.

As a reflection of the social complex of Holland, the art of Maes and his contemporaries is no less interesting. *The Housekeeper* is an intimate disclosure of seventeenth century domesticity in the Netherlands. Like De Hoogh's *Game of Skittles* and Ochtervelt's *Street Musicians* in the Museum collection, our newly acquired painting is evidence of the victory of the democratic bourgeois ideal of Holland over the aristocratic, monarchical tradition that had prevailed there until the seventeenth century. Independence of their Spanish overlords, self-government and hard-won security inspired in the Dutch a fresh love of their homeland and kindled a pride in their national life that reached down to the humblest detail of daily existence. The brilliant reflection of this deep and pervading attitude together with the style we know as realism formed the unique contribution of Dutch painting to Western art. It was in this mental climate that the art of Nicolaes Maes developed and reached its early perfection.

Nicolaes Maes was born the son of a soapmaker in the old river town of Dordrecht in 1632 and died in Amsterdam in 1693. At an early age, shortly before 1650, he was sent up to Amsterdam to be apprenticed to Rembrandt and it was to that fruitful experience that he owed the art that has preserved his fame, namely the rare genre painting of his early years.

He was not in any sense an imitator of Rembrandt. As

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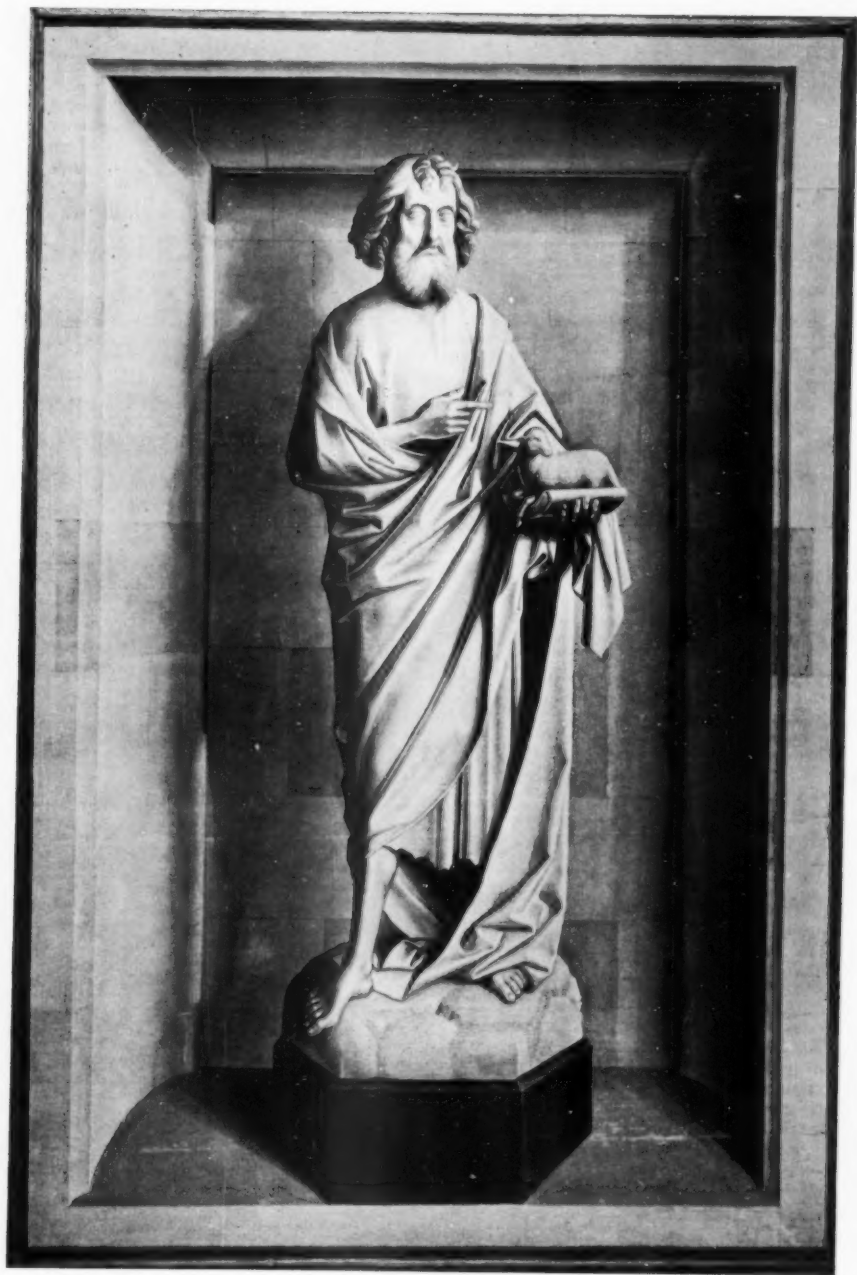
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DIRK BOUTS, *St. John the Baptist* (41  $\frac{3}{4}$  x 27 in.)  
*Cleveland Museum of Art*

Valentiner observes, he was the only pupil of the master who created an independent style. Moreover, from the end of his apprenticeship and following his return to Dordrecht, his art developed under the influence of the meticulous genre painters of Delft, Vermeer and Pieter de Hoogh. But while Maes must have been astute enough at an early age to realize that the grand generalizations of Rembrandt and his deeper poetry were beyond his own talents, he mastered his teacher's technique of drawing and chiaroscuro; and, equally important, he learned from him that a homely and simple subject, scrupulously observed and deeply felt, could provide the means for a great expression.

Our painting comes early in Maes' career. It is signed and dated 1656. Like all of the artist's genre works which are of consistently high quality it reveals his exquisite craftsmanship, a craftsmanship that reminds one of Vermeer in its perfect control of color and light and in the unifying touch of the brushwork. The picture is painted with an almost religious reverence for the subject, not only for the drowsy old woman laboring over her accounts, but for the homely informality of her surroundings; for the texture of wood and plaster wall, the crockery jug and the stiff wrinkled paper of the wall map. No less inspired is his observation of atmosphere and light. Here it strikes through the window at the left, dramatizing the subject, casting rich shadows, rendering every surface interesting, transforming prose into poetry. In tone Maes' painting is remarkable for the contrast achieved between cool bluish-whites and warm green-browns. This is the scheme of *The Housekeeper* where the whites of the light-bathed wall and the map are abruptly met by the coarse-grained buckram wainscoting, olive-brown in hue. Characteristically the composition is accented with rich blacks and

touches of brilliant scarlet which appear in the undersleeves of the garment and the upturned bowl on the shelf.

Maes made repeated use of the still-life objects in his paintings. In only a casual review of his genre pieces the suspended keys become familiar, as do the wall maps, the basket and bowls and open books. The same little spotted flagon in our picture appears half a dozen times. This habit suggests that Maes personally felt an inherent wonder in the most usual objects when touched with light. And in this willingness to observe with penetration the ordinary facts of his existence he partakes of the attitude of his scientific contemporaries.

The observer is bound to be struck by a seeming incongruity in the picture: a corner of a homely Dutch kitchen, cozy and quiet, probably smelling of fresh provisions and cooking food, while looming above the scene we see nothing less imposing than the globe itself hemispherically projected on a map. In this odd juxtaposition I think that Maes was innocent of any symbolism or ironic implications. He simply liked maps, and maps were almost as common as pictures in the Dutch household of his time. Moreover the map serves to remind us that not only was little Holland a world power in 1656, but that the Dutch were at this time the foremost cartographers of Europe.

Our picture is unpublished and its known history is brief. It is certain only that for several generations it was in the possession of a titled Austrian family from which the Museum acquired it. A closely related painting of the same subject but somewhat nearer square in proportions was formerly in the Baron L. Janssen Collection, Amsterdam. This painting was published as a Maes by Hofstede de Groot (*Catalogue Raisonné*, Vol. VI, No. 54), by W. Martin in his catalogue of the Janssen Collection and by Valentiner in his monograph

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GEERTGEN TOT SINT JANS, *The Adoration of the Magi* (11  $\frac{5}{8}$  x 7  $\frac{1}{2}$  in.)  
Cleveland Museum of Art



on the artist. The latter scholar now considers it an inferior work with a doubtful signature and an impossible date (1650) and accepts our painting as an outstanding and characteristic work of the master.

## TWO DUTCH FIFTEENTH CENTURY PANELS

From an article by Henry S. Francis in the January, 1952, *Bulletin* of The Cleveland Museum of Art.

Haarlem was the first center of Dutch painting, its finest achievements coming in its early phase, approximately between 1470 and 1550. In this earliest development, Dutch painting was largely indistinguishable from that of the main Flemish style, as both blossomed from the parent strain originated by the brothers Hubert and Jan van Eyck; and the Dutch painters, Dirk Bouts, Aelbert van Ouwater and Geertgen tot Sint Jans, were closer in many ways to the Van Eycks than were the Flemish painters proper. The panel pictures which became the glory of the Flemish tradition grew out of a combination of sources, and took from them . . . the grand style that united in so incomparable a way the delicate technique of miniature painting with the realistic spirit of Burgundian Gothic sculpture" (W. R. Valentiner, *The Art of the Low Countries*, 1914, p. 33).

To a small nucleus of painting of the Low Countries already in the Museum collection are added, by gift of Hanna Fund, two outstanding fifteenth century Dutch panels of the Haarlem school, the first and larger of which is a *St. John the Baptist* by Dirk Bouts; the second a small, and until recently wholly unknown, panel, *The Adoration of the Magi* by Geertgen tot Sint Jans.

The *St. John the Baptist*, one of the exterior wings of a dismembered altarpiece, is painted in grisaille, varying shades of gray and gray-green monotonous, to emulate such sculpture as would invariably have accompanied a large Gothic altar in architectural surroundings. Together with three panels now in the Alte Pinakothek in Munich—the companion exterior wing, *St. John the Evangelist* and two inner panels in color—it once formed a large altarpiece in Lyons. The sculptural figure of the Museum's Bouts stands in a niche on a pedestal painted to represent different types of stone, the shadow cast by the figure against the stone and the draperies being treated with a subtlety and wizardry of craftsmanship which achieved a super-realism attained only in the Low Countries. Every crease, line, and dent of the surface is portrayed with exactness and unerring fidelity to the nuances of the actual objects. Yet not only does Bouts succeed in creating the monumental, three-dimensional effect of sculpture, but he maintains in the process his own very distinctive type of painting. This panel, a well-known and published picture, once belonged to the Duke of Dessau and later became the property of Baron Thyssen-Bornemisza, from whose collection in Schloss Rohoncz it now comes.

Born in Haarlem around 1420, Bouts, Roger van der Weyden's junior by twenty years, belonged to the generation following the Van Eycks. Though he must have had his first training in his homeland, he undoubtedly received further experience from painting in Flanders, as his work gives evidence of having had contact with that of Van der Weyden. The gaunt and bony type and the taut, reserved, and aloof quality of his figures were Bouts' own and essentially Dutch, but they have a relation to those of Roger as well.

The little panel of the *Adoration* by Geertgen presents a



The Madonna and Child  
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RICHARD TASSEL  
1580 - 1660

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very sharp contrast to the Bouts. A diminutive picture, delicately rich in color, it appears to be only one step removed from Northern painting in its chrysalis stage of miniature painting. Yet it contains within its deep, enameled coloring the quintessence of Dutch painting, that is, a certain relaxation and freedom of expression which is the result of the artist's having searched objectively to find the most poignant manner of representing the subject, a method of approach found in all Geertgen's painting.

Valentiner says of Geertgen that he "was the greatest of the early Dutchmen, the Rembrandt of the fifteenth century" and that Dürer admired his work. Geertgen's dates are uncertain, his birthdate being probably about 1465. Therefore, he belonged to the period of a generation later than that of Dirk Bouts. Aelbert van Ouwater, whose very few surviving works scarcely allow a competent appraisal to be made of his greatness, was Geertgen's master. Valentiner says his works "reveal a self-sufficient personality almost inaccessible to outside influences . . ." Certainly a seriousness, as well as a tenderness and a warmth, suffuses his work; there is also a simplicity of subject both as to content and treatment of characterization.

Among Geertgen's works, the one most nearly related to the Museum panel is *The Nativity* of the National Gallery, London, in which the figure of the Madonna might well be taken from the same model. In the Cleveland panel, the simplicity and the straight-forward composition of the figures placed against a ruined manger, with a characteristic landscape in the background; the details of costume, such as the pomegranate textile worn by the first king at the right; the goldsmithry, such as the pieces in the foreground — all recall the several other large and more elaborate versions of the Adoration

subject which Geertgen painted. The present panel remained in obscurity until its very recent discovery in England, whence it comes to Cleveland as a very distinguished addition to the collection of paintings.

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## RECENT PUBLICATIONS IN THE FIELD OF ART

*Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University: Annual Report 1950-51.*

For some forty years the Fogg Art Museum has been one of the outstanding driving forces in its own field — museography. It has formed curators, art historians and, what is probably as important, connoisseurs. Its influence on American museums has been, and still is, great and beneficial; the ideals and standards of its museum course, under Mr. Paul Sachs and Mr. Forbes, later assisted by Dr. Rosenberg, have been consistently high. For many Europeans the Fogg has been at the same time the Courtauld Institute and the Ecole du Louvre of America.

To survive in periods of inflation all museums need gifts of money. The Fogg is of course no exception. Yet such gifts are apparently no longer forthcoming and the Fogg's Annual Report for 1950-51 presents a gloomy picture. The staff has been reduced, petty economies have been made. The activities of the Oriental Department and the Conservation Department, the achievements of which are outstanding, have been drastically retrenched; no full curator has been appointed to succeed Langdon Warner, and it has been impossible to renew the appointments of the joint heads of the Conservation Department. Without these departments the Fogg may lose not only some of its prestige but also of its usefulness. Yet the

necessary sum of money is not, after all, very great. As Mr. Coolidge points out in his report: "In the fiscal year 1951-52, the Fogg Museum plans to receive 60% of its income from endowments; 15% from annual gifts. It is this last item which may produce difficulties. Last year we only succeeded in raising \$30,000 from this source. In this period of high taxes and inflation the \$55,000 we need is a great deal of money to raise." Is it too much to hope that some collector will realize the plight of one of the most useful of Harvard's organizations? The Fogg has never been so active. Its collection keeps on growing. After the extraordinary Winthrop collection, the Wertheim collection of modern art, the Whittemore outstanding group of Byzantine and Islamic coins and seals have been added to its resources. The Fogg library, a necessary tool of American scholarship, increases yearly in importance. New concepts of the institution's usefulness, based on the Sachs-Forbes ideals, are giving a new life to the Fogg; far more importance is given to modern art, as was well shown last year by the choice of exhibitions and themes for symposiums. The Fogg is not a monument but a living organism which can survive only by growing. Such an honest Report as the present one should attract a great deal of attention in art circles in this country. It was a favorite saying of Mr. Sachs that museum curators are high class beggars, and we all know how true this is. But should they be?

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*Die Musik in den Graphischen Künsten.* Vienna, Albertina, 1951.

There are no illustrations in this catalogue, which makes it less impressive than it really is. In fact it forms a helpful list of the best-known engravings (with a few drawings) on the subject of music, the most useful of its kind since Kinsky's *Geschichte der Musik in Bildern* (1929). About 300 works were exhibited, each one listed with appropriate bibliography. Obviously the exhibition could not claim to be exhaustive, and the lion's share is given to engravings before 1800; but for the earlier centuries the selection is excellent, if rather conventional.

*Les Primitifs Flamands.* Corpus de la peinture des anciens Pays-Bas méridionaux au quinzième siècle. Edited by the Centre National de Recherches "Primitifs Flamands." Volume I, parts 1 to 4, Le Musée Communal de Bruges, by A. Janssens de Bisthoven and R. A. Parmentier. Antwerp, De Sikkel, publishers. Paper cover, Bg.frs.420; bound, B.f.480; with separate plates, B.f.520.

One must welcome the initiative of the Belgian scholars who have undertaken to produce a Corpus of their fifteenth century painting. Such a project, if carried through, will be of the greatest usefulness to us all and deserves the widest support. The members of the Centre National which has undertaken the Corpus are: Director, P. Coremans, director of the Central Archives and Laboratory in Brussels and pro-

fessor in the University of Ghent; members: P. Bonenfant, professor at the University of Brussels; H. Bouchery, professor at the University of Ghent; P. Fierens, professor at the University of Liège and J. Lavalleye, professor at the University of Louvain. Professor Lavalleye is chairman of the editing committee. The format of this first volume is good: ample page size (11¾ x 9 inches) which gives an illustration of 9 x 6¾ inches. There are numerous details. The two panels of the *Justice of Cambyse* by Gerard David are, for example, represented by 51 plates; the *St. John Baptist* altar by David by 42 plates. The standard of visibility of these black and white plates is generally good. Three color plates are included but these the student will have to use with care.

The text is full, factual and careful, covering: (1) the title, the current attribution and museum catalogue number of each picture; (2) a physical description (including a report on the frame); (3) the iconography of the subject; (4) the history of the picture and of its attributions, exhibitions and scholarly discussions; (5) a list of other versions or related and comparative works; (6) the opinion of the authors on state and attribution; (7) bibliography. Other volumes are in preparation or projected on the Galleria Sabauda, Turin; the National Gallery, London, the Musées Royaux, Brussels; the Louvre, the Musée Royal, Antwerp; the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, etc. Some of these museums have published good catalogues and yet the present series offers still fuller and more exact information. In other cases this elaborate and objective study will offer information formerly most difficult for American students to acquire. In either case, the new Corpus will be most useful and welcome.



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GISELA M. A. RICHTER, *Three Critical Periods in Greek Sculpture*. New York, Oxford University Press, 1952.

This important book, written by an authority in the field, comprises a series of lectures delivered at Dumbarton Oaks. Three turning-points in sculpture are discussed: the innovations of Phidias, together with a discussion of his early style; Lysippus as the initiator of Hellenistic art; Greek sculptors as copyists in the first century B.C. and the assignment to them of "Roman" portraits.

After the Persian wars new trends came in in unusual poses, the representation of momentary attitudes, the rendering of emotion in facial expression and the beginnings of portraiture. The early style of Phidias was marked by these new tendencies. They were employed in representations of battles between Greeks and amazons on the shield of his gold and ivory statue of Athena in the Parthenon at Athens. These scenes were copied on the Strangford shield in London and on reliefs found in the sea off the Piraeus harbor in Athens. They show figures standing on their heads, jumping off cliffs and in flight, as well as individualized heads of Phidias and Pericles. This trend toward naturalism was retarded by Phidias in his later style which was probably influenced by his work on colossal cult statues. The later style displays ideal conceptions, sublimity, serenity and quiet poses usually associated with him.

Lysippus, with his interest in nature, originated the epoch-making changes of Hellenistic art toward realism. The twists and turns in the bodies of figures; the restlessness and agitation of art after the death of Alexander and the development of portraiture go back to him. His interest in the third dimension, seen in his figures with extended arms and in his poses, might have been mentioned. The first making of casts of sculpture

was attributed to the brother of Lysippus. From this the later pointing system for making exact copies was evolved. It was probably invented by Pasiteles in the first century B.C.

The so-called Roman portraits are the work of Greek sculptors. The signatures are almost all Greek, whether on statues, gems or cameos. Some few are in Latin, but the names are Greek. There is no tradition of Roman sculptors. In fact, Latin writers disclaim an interest in the creation of art and assign it to the Greeks.

An appendix dates the Laocoon in the second century B.C. instead of 50 B.C., because of its resemblance to sculptures on the altar of Zeus at Pergamum. It is an original Greek work of this time, no copy.

Challenging new views are presented here which seem very convincing. The author is to be congratulated. There are no errors except two figure numbers on page 49.

The book is beautifully printed; the excellent plates contain many new illustrations. It should appeal to the general public as well as to scholars.

Mary Hamilton Swindler  
University of Michigan

*Chinese Ceramics from the Prehistoric Period through Ch'ien Lung*. Los Angeles County Museum, 1952.

Every spring for the past few years Mr. Trubner, the curator of Oriental art at the Los Angeles Museum, has organized extremely important loan exhibitions—Chinese Paintings, The Arts of Greater India, among others. These exhibitions were accompanied by carefully prepared and well illustrated catalogues. This spring Mr. Trubner chose for his theme "Chinese Ceramics from the Prehistoric Period through Ch'ien Lung." The result is even more impressive than in preceding

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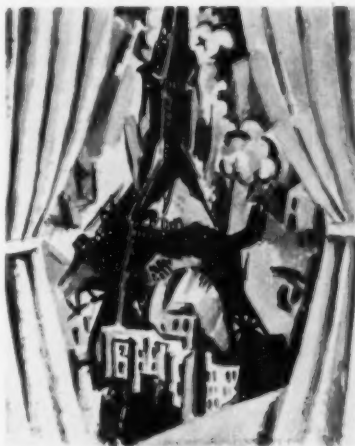
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years, and the catalogue gives an adequate idea of the wealth of material available in this country, as well as of the generosity of the Japanese authorities which lent fifteen extremely important examples.

Nearly 400 pieces were exhibited, all representative, all chosen with discernment and taste. The great majority of these pieces have been reproduced in the catalogue; all have been described in great detail. Most remarkable perhaps is the nice balance established between the number of well-known examples and the unpublished specimens, mostly from dealers and private collections. It is impossible to praise too highly the catalogue, which of course will remain a standard reference work; yet attention should be drawn to the introduction, which in a few pages forms (with Professor Plumer's perhaps too little known essay on the subject published in Ann Arbor) the most succinct and most clear résumé of a complex subject.

*The Le Roy M. Backus Memorial Collection.* Seattle Art Museum, 1952.

With the exception of the collection at the Crocker Art Gallery in Sacramento, there are few collections of early drawings in Western museums. It is welcome news, therefore, that the Seattle Art Museum has received as a gift what is probably the most valuable section of the Le Roy M. Backus collection of drawings. This is a small collection, twenty drawings (in addition to two paintings), all of excellent quality. The majority belong to the schools of Northern Europe, the examples by Dürer (*Madonna and Child*, from the Lawrence collection) and Baldung Grien (*Pietà*, study for the Berlin painting) being perhaps the most interesting. The catalogue is preceded by a charming introduction.

*Bibliography of the History of British Art*, Volume V, parts I and II, 1938-1945. Courtauld Institute of Art, University of London. Cambridge University Press, 1952.

The preceding volume of this bibliography having appeared in 1939, the present volume covers the period 1938-1945, with a promise from the Courtauld Institute that Volume VI (1946-1948) will be published sometime this year. The present volume in its unassuming form is a monument of scholarship. It seems literally that all periodicals of any importance, of all degrees of popularity in all countries, have been consulted and dissected, with flattering attention being paid to bulletins from American museums. The result is a splendid tool, in which the scholar and the casual researcher may have full confidence. To choose at random some examples: more than 250 entries (not counting cross-references) are given under "Ceramics"; 60 under "Arms and Armour," the majority with short comments which usually form résumés of the articles. A 60 page index is not the least useful section of the bibliography.

*Rediscovered Italian Paintings.* New Haven, Yale University Art Gallery, 1952.

The Jarves Collection of more than a hundred Italian Primitives, which had its beginnings just a century ago and includes such works as Pollaiuolo's *Rape of Deianira*, has long been famous. Fourteen of the panels from the collection have recently been cleaned, with a great deal of care and respect. The present catalogue describes these works in detail with, in the majority of cases, illuminating "before" and "after" photographs. At a time when it seems that the Conservation Depart-

ment of the Fogg Museum, which has done so much in this country, will be disbanded, it is welcome news that Yale University is interested in such problems.

As Mr. Lamont Moore states in his introduction to the catalogue, the exhibition was "an exercise in museum techniques, carried out by students interested in museum work as a profession." Following that introduction is an essay by Professor Charles Seymour, Jr., on the place of the museum in universities.

BENJAMIN ROWLAND, JR., *The Harvard Outline and Reading Lists for Oriental Art.* Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1952.

Reading lists are always useful but never more so than in Oriental art. The present list is a complete revision of the *Outline and Bibliographies of Oriental Art* first published in 1938. It is therefore quite up-to-date, but includes old stand-bys such as Laufer's *T'ang, Sung and Yüan Paintings*, published in 1924, and the works of Segalen. A quick spot-checking of several sections showed that this revision is indeed excellent: for instance, no work of importance is missing from the section on Chinese sculpture, which includes such volumes as those published by Chavannes in 1893 as well as such recent works as Rudolph's *Han Tomb Art* published last year. A useful, clear and sensible list, which covers also Oriental literature and philosophy in their general aspects.

*Catalogue of Paintings.* Oxford, Ashmolean Museum.

Although Mr. K. T. Parker, the Keeper of the Ashmolean Museum, states modestly that this is only a "provisional" catalogue, this is as useful a tool as may be desired, with up-to-date bibliography in all pertinent cases. The catalogue unfortunately is not illustrated. However what appears to be the first of a helpful series of picture books accompanies the catalogue — a well chosen selection of some thirty paintings, most of them by no means well known but of excellent quality. Among the illustrations are the *Virgin and Child* from the so-called Allendale group, sold at Christie's in 1949 (Cathart collection; as by Cariani) and the *Allegory of Justice and Vanity*, which has been attributed variously to Honthorst, Matthew Stomer and Nicolas Tournier.

## RECENT PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

RICHARD BERNHEIMER, *Wild Men in the Middle Ages.* Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1952.

SOAME JENYNS, *Later Chinese Porcelain.* London, Faber and Faber, n.d.

DEANE B. JUDD, *Color in Business, Science and Industry.* New York, John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1952.

JOHN MORANZ, *The Professional Guide to Drawing and Illustration.* New York, Grosset and Dunlap, Inc., 1952.

JAMES C. MOREHEAD and JAMES C. MOREHEAD, JR., *Handbook of Perspective Drawing.* Houston, Elsevier Press, 1952.

*Prehistoric Stone Sculpture of the Pacific Northwest.* Portland Art Museum, 1952.

*Publications In Mediaeval Studies*, Vols. XI, XII, XIII: FRANCIS J. TSCHAN, *St. Bernward of Hildesheim, His Life and Times; His Works of Art; Album of All Extant Works.* Notre Dame, Indiana, University of Notre Dame Press, 1952.

ELIZABETH DU GUÉ TRAPIER, *Ribera.* New York, The Hispanic Society of America, 1952.



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